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Henrietta Louisa.

COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Engraved from an original Picture in Crayons, by Caroline Watson

Published Jan. 1-1803 by Richard Phillips, 6, New Bridge Street, London.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

FRANCES,
COUNTESS OF HARTFORD,

(AFTERWARDS DUCHESS OF SOMERSET,)

AND

HENRIETTA LOUISA,
COUNTESS OF POMFRET,

BETWEEN THE YEARS

1738 AND 1741.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

London :

PRINTED BY I. GOLD, SHOE LANE,

FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS, NO. 6, BRIDGE-STREET,
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1805.

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TO
MRS. BURSLEM,
OF
IMBER HOUSE, WILTS,
THESE LETTERS,

PRINTED FROM
MANUSCRIPTS,
THE PROPERTY OF HER FAMILY,

ARE
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY HER OBLIGED

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

WM. BINGLEY.

Christchurch,
January 14, 1805.

PREFATORY MEMOIRS.

FRANCES, COUNTESS OF HARTFORD,

AND AFTERWARDS

DUCHESS OF SOMERSET,

WAS the eldest of the two daughters and coheirs of the honorable Henry Thynne, only son of Thomas, first viscount Weymouth, by Grace, only daughter and heir of sir George Strode, of Leveston in Dorsetshire *. She was married about

* Her younger sister, Mary, was the wife of William Grenville, lord Brooke, and died at the early age of nineteen years.

the year 1713, to Algernon, lord Hartford, eldest son of Charles then duke of Somerset, a young nobleman distinguished for every amiable virtue that could adorn his rank.

This marriage, the consequence of a sincere attachment, was productive of lasting happiness. The fruits of it were, first, a daughter, lady Elizabeth Seymour, born in November 1716, who afterwards became duchess of Northumberland*; and a son, George Seymour, viscount Beauchamp, born on the eleventh of Sep-

* The extensive charities of this lady to the poor; her encouragement of literature and the polite arts, and her generous patronage of every kind of merit, rendered her death a public loss, which was long lamented.

tember 1725. He died of the small pox, which seized him at Bologna, during his travels on the Continent, and carried him off the evening of his birth-day on which he had completed his nineteenth year.

Not long after her marriage, lady Hartford became one of the ladies of the bedchamber to Caroline, the queen of king George the Second, then princess of Wales. She continued in this office till the death of the queen, which took place in the month of November 1737, when both she and the countess of Pomfret (also of the bedchamber) retired from the bustle and jealousies of the court, to enjoy the more satisfactory comforts of domestic life. They appear

to have been much attached to their royal mistress, whose death they each speak of in their letters, in terms of sincere regret.

If lady Hartford had not been known to the public at an earlier period, her meritorious conduct in the case of Savage, a man of whose deserts opinions are very various, must have called the general attention to her virtues. It is well known that Savage was tried, and condemned to be hanged, for a murder committed in a drunken rencounter, at Robinson's coffee house, Charing Cross, in the month of November 1727. His inhuman mother, the then countess of Macclesfield, instead of interesting her-

self in soliciting his pardon, contrived, by every infamous means, to prejudice the royal ear against her son, in order that, even by an ignominious death, he might be removed from her sight for ever. Her calumny, almost unequalled in the annals of cruelty, was but too successful; and for a long time the queen, misled and influenced by it alone, refused to hear any of those whose humanity induced them to petition for his life.

At this calamitous juncture, the countess of Hartford, who had become acquainted with his merits, with the circumstances of the accident, and particularly with his mother's atrocity, boldly stepped forward in his defence. She demanded an audience of the queen,

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“laid before her,” says Johnson*, “the whole series of his mother’s cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation, by which he had been charged with an *intent* to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason of extraordinary severity. The interposition of this lady of rank,” says the same energetic writer, “too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed,” was so successful, that Savage was soon afterwards admitted to bail, and in the course of three months from the commission of the murder, pleaded the king’s pardon, and was liberated.

* In the Life of Savage.

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In the ensuing year, Thomson published his *Spring*. This elegant poem he inscribed to the countess of Hartford.

“ O Hartford ! fitted or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With innocence and meditation join'd
In soft assemblage, listen to my song,
Which thy own season paints, when Nature all
Is blooming and benevolent like thee.”

The account that Johnson has given of lady Hartford's acquaintance with this poet, and the intention of it, may be correct ; but if we are permitted to judge of her ladyship's actions from the uniform stile of her writing, we cannot doubt but that a severity is there expressed, which was not altogether just. His words are these : “ *Spring* was published in the next year, with a dedication

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to lady Hartford; whose practice it was to invite every summer some poet into the country, *to hear her verses*, and assist her studies. This honor was one summer conferred on Thomson, who took more delight in carousing with lord Hartford and his friends, than assisting her ladyship's poetical operations, *and therefore never received another summons**.

Lady Hartford once prevailed upon Thomson to promise her that he would write a poetical description of the fountain of Vaucluse, so celebrated by the sonnets of Petrarch. But, as she says in one of her subsequent letters, "the

* Life of Thomson.

promises of *poets* are not always to be depended on."

Amongst various other celebrated literary characters with whom lady Hartford became personally acquainted, were Dr. Burnet, Dr. Isaac Watts, Mr. Shennstone, Mrs. Carter, lady Luxborough (the sister of lord Bolingbroke), and Mrs. Rowe. Many of her letters to these have been already published; they exhibit the same excellence of character and goodness of heart that are observable in those of the present volumes.

Dr. Watts dedicated his "*Miscellanies*" to the countess of Hartford; and, after Mrs. Rowe's death, when he published that lady's "*Meditations*," he wrote to

lady Hartford, requesting permission to inscribe them to her. She did not refuse, but, as in the case of the "Miscellanies," expressly requested that her name should be concealed. This dedication, though the name is suppressed, exhibits the very high opinion and esteem that Dr. Watts entertained of her virtues. Shenstone's beautiful "Ode on Rural Elegance," written in 1750, but not published till some time after her death, is also inscribed to this lady.

These are public tokens of the admiration in which her virtues and her taste were held by those from whom praise is indeed valuable, who were able justly to appreciate her excellence, and whose opinion, though expressed in the eulo-

gium of dedication, must still have its weight among the discerning part of mankind.

On the decease of Charles duke of Somerset, in December 1748, Algernon duke of Somerset having lost his only son, and his daughter being married to sir Hugh Smithson, bart. procured a new patent of creation, dated October 2, 1749, 22 Geo. II, as earl of Egremont and baron Cockermouth, with remainder to sir Charles Wyndham, the elder son of his sister lady Catherine Seymour, to whom the great estates of Cockermouth, and Petworth in Sussex, have descended. In 1766 sir Hugh Smithson was created duke of Northumberland and earl Percy, and was the father

of the present duke, and the earl of Beverley. By virtue of the original patent, he succeeded to the earldom of Northumberland.

In the death of her son, who, as she has herself said, "promised all that the fondest wishes of the fondest parents could hope," lady Hartford experienced an affliction, which, although her resignation to the dispensations of the Almighty taught her to bear with becoming fortitude, she could never forget, nor for which she could ever cease to sigh. And a long series of pain and infirmity, which was daily gaining ground, began about the same time to prepare her for a blow at least equally severe, in the death of her lord. This event took place on the

17th of February 1749-50, at the age of about 65 years.

As lord Hartford, then duke of Somerset and earl of Northumberland, left no surviving male issue, the title devolved to sir Edward Seymour of Berry Pomeroy in Devonshire. That baronet was lineally descended from the elder son of the Protector Somerset and his first wife, from whom he had been divorced. The duke of Somerset's great estates in Middlesex and Northumberland were settled on his only daughter and heir the lady Elizabeth, wife of sir Hugh Smithson, of Stanwick in Yorkshire.

From this period lady Hartford (now dowager duchess of Somerset,) lived al-

most wholly secluded from the fashionable world at her seat near Colnbrook, which the duke, when lord Hartford, had purchased of lord Bathurst. The name, from Richings or Richkings, was changed to that of Percy Lodge; and under the latter name we find it often mentioned in the works of Shenstone and other poets.

Here this amiable and accomplished lady closed her life, in the month of July 1754; and she was interred, in the same vault with her beloved spouse and son, in St. Nicholas's chapel, Westminster Abbey.

The character of lady Hartford may be drawn up in few words:—From the

earliest part of her life she afforded an amiable example of virtues united with rank. Her acquirements in literature were various, and her reading, particularly in history, appears to have been very extensive. She had some taste for poetical composition ; but the specimens contained in the present volumes, are not, perhaps, the most favourable ones that could be adduced. There are four poetical pieces by her ladyship (concealed under the signature of Eusebia), in the sixty-third number of Dr. Watts' Miscellanies.

In all her friendly attachments she was sincere, tender, and affectionate. In her family she was ever anxiously alive to the calls of duty. During the long

sicknesses of lord Hartford, who, for many years previous to his death, was dreadfully afflicted with the gout, she was his principal nurse and attendant. And in care respecting the education of her children, inspiring into their youthful minds the principles of virtue, and the love of religion, she has had but too few equals in her own rank of life. This care would have been abundantly repaid by both, had they both lived to survive her. After the loss of her son, lord Beauchamp, as I have before said, her mind was affected with a languor and melancholy of which she never afterwards perfectly recovered. She died in perfect resignation to the will of God, by whom she considered her afflictions given for wise purposes, of which it ill became her to complain. In

one of her affecting letters to lady Luxborough, she thus expresses herself:—

“ I have indeed suffered deeply ; but when I consider it is the will of God, who never chastises his poor creatures but for their good, and reflect at the same time how unworthy I was of those blessings, which I now lament the loss of, I lay my hand upon my mouth, and dare not repine ; but I hope I can with truth appeal to Him in the following words :—

“ Such sorrow is sent that none may oppose his holy dispensations. Let me sigh, and offer my sighs to Him : Let me mourn, but in the mean time, in the midst of my sorrow, let me bless his sacred name *.”

* This quotation is in Italian in the original.

HENRIETTA LOUISA, COUNTESS OF
POMFRET.

THIS lady was the only surviving child of John lord Jefferys of Wem, and lady Charlotte Herbert, daughter of Phillip, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. Her grandfather was the lord Chancellor who bore so conspicuous a part in the reign of James the Second *.

* Dr. Johnson relates an anecdote of lady Pomfret's father, without giving much credit to it, concerning his interrupting the funeral of Dryden. He finished a dissipated life, in 1703, leaving this infant daughter; and his widow re-married with Thomas, lord Viscount Windsor.

In the year 1720 she was united in marriage to Thomas Fermor, lord Lempster, who, in the subsequent year, was created earl of Pomfret, or Pontefract, in the county of York. This nobleman was afterwards elected a knight of the Bath; and in September 1727, was appointed Master of the Horse to Caroline, queen of George the Second, to whom also lady Pomfret was one of the ladies of the bedchamber.

On the death of the queen, 1737, both lady Pomfret and lady Hartford retired from public life; and the present letters inform us, that it was after this period that the close degree of intimacy commenced, to which we are indebted for their being written. The former lady

says; in one of them, “ I do not grieve that our friendship did not begin sooner; since I am certain it would have excited the *good-nature* of a great many people, though they had not cared one farthing about either of us, to have made it their business, by a thousand lies on both sides, to inform us how dangerous a person each was to the other, and how unfit for a friend.”

These letters commenced very soon after lord Pomfret and his family left England to reside on the continent; and they were continued for about three years (till their return), at intervals of not often much more than a week from each other. There were, however, necessarily some omissions arising from illness,

irregular foreign posts, and other causes, but they were not many.

The first letter of the collection was written by lady Pomfret from Monts, near Paris, in the beginning of September 1738. Here the family continued, making occasional excursions to Paris and other places in the neighbourhood, till towards the end of April following, when they took their departure for Sienna, in Italy. In their route they passed through Lyons, Aix, and Marseilles; and from the latter place embarked, though in bad weather, in a felucca, for Genoa. They arrived in safety, and soon afterwards set out for Sienna. Their residence at this place was about half a year, and they intended to have continued for some

months longer ; but having found it extremely dull, expensive, and void of conveniences, they at length determined to proceed to Florence, where they arrived on the 20th of December 1739. Florence was in every agreeable respect very different from the place they had left. Here they were well accommodated, and found excellent society, both in the inhabitants, and in the constant succession of English visitors. They continued at Florence more than twelve months, residing in a house called Palazzo Ridolfi, formerly belonging to the Medici family, and particularly celebrated as having been the residence of the well-known Bianca Capello.

It was here that they were visited by

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU from Venice, who remained with them near two months, till she could embark in a ship (which she expected) for Leghorn. In company with this lady they visited the Florentine gallery, and other curiosities in the place and neighbourhood. Lady Mary left them in October 1740, and they continued in Florence till the latter end of February, or the beginning of March following, when they proceeded to Rome. During the few months they remained in this place, lady Pomfret is said to have written a life of Vandyck. They soon afterwards returned to England by way of Bologna, Venice, Augsburg, Frankfort, and Brussels; and they arrived in this country in the month of October 1741.

Lady Pomfret's remarks during this journey are generally well expressed in her letters, and bear the appearance of arising from correct and acute observation. In her reflections, and in her descriptions of human life, her thoughts and language often take an air of elegance ; and the great length of time that she was resident in different places abroad, gives a degree of authenticity to her writings, which the generality of books of travels are not able to boast.

Lord Pomfret died on the 8th of July 1753, at the age of fifty-five, and was succeeded in his estate and title by his eldest son George, lord Lempster, the father of the present earl.

A part of the celebrated collection of marbles made by Thomas earl of Arundel, and thence called the “ Arundel Marbles,” having been purchased by sir William Fermor, the father of lord Pomfret, was given by her ladyship, in the year 1758, to the University of Oxford. It consists of statues, busts, basso-relievos, &c. in number one hundred and thirty-five pieces, and is now deposited in the Logic and Moral Philosophy schools there—a place, however, in every respect unworthy of them. This valuable present alone ought justly to endear the noble donor to all lovers of the Fine Arts.

The Countess of Pomfret died in December 1761, leaving four sons and six

daughters. She was interred with her husband's family at Easton Neston, in Northamptonshire, but a neat cœnograph has been since erected to her memory in the university church at Oxford.

With respect to the character and literary acquirements of lady Pomfret, which, in every essential respect, seem to have very nearly resembled those of her amiable friend and distinguished correspondent, the best source of information that has been open to the Editor is the following letters. To these, therefore, he refers the reader, only remarking, by way of introduction, that all the passages from whence conclusions can be justly drawn, will concur in affording proofs of

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an intelligent and well-informed mind,
and of a heart susceptible of amiable
virtues and unaffected devotion.

1877

John J. ...
and ...
...

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CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

LADY HARTFORD & LADY POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Sept. $\left. \begin{smallmatrix} 2, \\ 13, \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$ 1738.

YOUR ladyship's obliging command that I should write to you, I with great pleasure obey; but I am ashamed to think how little entertainment I can send you from a country, that is esteemed an inexhaustible fund of amusements to all the polite world who visit it. I am not insensible to its charms, a clear air, a beautiful and well-cultivated soil, with a civil and diverting people: yet all this is nothing but

what Gordon's Grammar can tell you better than I. What then, am I to describe palaces, parks, and gardens? which (besides that you have heard of them a thousand times already) I have hitherto run over in such haste, that I scarcely recollect where I saw them. The sum of my observations is this. Lewis the Fourteenth for ever had Pharamond in his view; love, arms, and arts, were the characters in which he strove to transmit his name to posterity: but, like the Egyptian monarch, he is deceived; a little time has worn those pompous forms away, and Vanity appears the only real architect. The present Lewis takes a different turn; and if he gave the least occasion to suspect his reading, I should believe that he derived his pattern from the Italian Pastor Fido, and that Silviuſ was the man.

Thus much for kings; and to shew you how little else I can say of them, I will inform you of my situation, and manner of

life. The first is in a small but very pretty village, with two or three gentlemen's families in it; my house is old but convenient, with as large a garden as I desire: my dressing-room looks down on the river Seine, which runs through a varied and delightful country. For the second, I rise early, work a little, read more, and walk very much.

I heartily hope this may find your ladyship and family in all the happiness that you merit, and that your friends wish, in which number permit me to place,

Dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged and

Most obedient humble servant,

HENRIETTA LOUISA POMFRET.

*To the Right Hon. Lady Hartford,
at her house in Grosvenor-street,
near Grovesnor-square, London,
—Angleterre.*

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Hermitage on St. Leonard's Hill, Sept. ^{18,} } 1738.
_{29,} }

You would be very unjust, dear madam, if you did not believe that the letter I troubled you with proceeded from the sincerity of my heart, and the real desire that I have to continue the friendship which you have allowed me to flatter myself with. I shall always feel myself interested in whatever regards you, and must, consequently, wish to hear of your health, and that of your family; for unless they enjoy theirs, I am sure you will have no comfort of your own.

How can you talk of not being able to entertain me by an account of the people and places you have seen, since, though they might oblige you to mention the same

subjects that are in Gordon's Grammar, I fancy you would describe them in a much more agreeable way? I think the king of France is obliged to you for finding out any character which he might be supposed to copy; for his *étourderies* appeared to me to be something new under the sun. But you have really found his resemblance; he has only produced them in a new point of view, and shewn us what an effect the brutality of a forester must have when raised to a throne.

I dare say you have heard, from people who are better informed than I am, of the quarrels which have taken place at Tunbridge, and which, I am told, have occasioned some very scandalous lampoons; the people concerned in them were my lady Townshend and Mrs. Edwin.

I hear of a great many schemes and adventures, in a place where you and I had once more concern than we have at

present*. I have not been there since I saw you, so can say nothing from my own knowledge; and I have lived too long in that climate to trust reports that come either from those who do or do not inhabit it.

My lord's frequent returns of the gout have kept us in this forest† all the summer, and I believe we shall remain here till the badness of the weather drives us to a warmer situation in Grosvenor Street. I am not in haste for that time, for though we live a solitary life here, I cannot say that I find my time hang heavy upon my

* At St. James's: they were both ladies of the bedchamber to queen Caroline.

† St. Leonard's Hill, now the seat of general Harcourt, is in Windsor Forest, about two miles from Windsor. The house was rebuilt by the countess of Wakegrave, afterwards married to the duke of Gloucester; and for some years it went by the name of Gloucester Lodge.

hands. Betwixt reading, working, walking, and riding, I have full employment for the day.

I went last week to see a little island, which the duke of Marlborough has bought, at Bray, and which, with the decorations, is said to have cost him eight thousand pounds. He has a small house upon it, whose outside represents a farm, the inside what you please; for the parlour, which is the only room in it, except a kitchen, is painted upon the ceiling in grotesque, with monkeys, fishing, shooting, &c. and its sides are hung with paper. When a person sits in this room he cannot see the water, though the island is not above a stone's cast over: nor is he prevented from this by shade; for, except six or eight walnut-trees, and a few orange-trees in tubs, there is not a leaf upon the island; it arises entirely from the river running very much below its banks. There is another building, which

I think is called a temple, but it rather gives one the idea of a market-house. Upon the whole, it should seem that his grace has taken a hint from the Man of Ross's public spirit; and, in order not to copy him too slavishly, has bestowed a treat upon the eyes instead of the bellies of the passengers; rather than that he has proposed any enjoyment to himself: for he cannot move upon the island without being seen by all the bargemen who pass; neither can he get out of the reach of their conversation, if they are disposed to talk.

I should think myself very happy, if I could convey myself, with a wish, into your dressing-room, when you would be at leisure, to return some of the kind visits you made me in mine last winter; though I am afraid, if you should judge of their length by that of this letter, you would not easily determine on a time to admit of so long an interruption from your more

agreeable employments ; for which reason
I will add no more to it, than the assurance
of my being, with great truth,

Dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged and

Obedient humble servant,

FRANCES HARTFORD.

*A Madame, Madame la Comtesse
de Pomfret, à Monts.*

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Oct. $\left. \begin{smallmatrix} 6, \\ 17, \end{smallmatrix} \right\} 1738.$

SINCE you have so kind a wish for me, dear madam, as that of coming to my dressing-room, I will indulge the agreeable thought that it is effected ; and, though I scarcely know how, will believe you here. I will imagine that I have placed you in my great chair ; on your left hand is the fire, (no bad thing this weather), and on your right a window, from which you see the river, bordered on each side with meadows, vineyards, corn-fields, villages, and *châteaux*. I congratulate my own happiness on your arrival. I recount to you my journey, the things I have seen, and the things that I was forced to leave unseen from the hurry we were in.

As I believe you may have heard less of

St. Germain's than of some of the other palaces, I shall enlarge most upon that. It was built by that polite hero, and gallant prince, Francis the First, in compliment to his mistress, whose name was Diana. It is constructed in form of a Gothic D, with five towers; and it is six stories high; the three first stories are of stone, the three highest of brick; and there is an open gallery, which runs round the middle on the outside, with iron rails. Within is a court, that coaches (to the rank of a duke) have the privilege of entering. And the whole castle is encompassed by a large dry ditch, over which are draw-bridges. The emblem of Francis the First was a salamander in flames; this is placed, alternately with a crowned F, round the turrets of the building, and is also carved over the gate-way. The apartments are noble, and the conveniences for the servants very great. The gardens are not large; but there is, on the side of the

forest, perhaps the finest terrace in the world, being two thousand seven hundred yards long, and fifty broad; from whence there is a view of the Seine, and of a most beautiful country. The forest itself is of vast extent, and finely wooded, cut into walks and stars.

In St. Germain's the succeeding kings of France generally lived, till Lewis the Fourteenth (whow as born here) built Versailles, amuch more extensive but much less noble palace, and resigned this to king James the Second; since the death of whose widow the royal lodgings have been left unfurnished. It is now of much the same use as Somerset-house in London. There are still some remains of that abdicated court: amongst others is lady Middleton, sister to my lady Westmoreland, yet in her perfect health and senses. She followed her husband out of England, and was lady of the bedchamber to queen Mary, and governess to the princess Louisa. This

poor lady, whilst I was at St. Germain's, lost her youngest son ; whose story has in it something so interesting, that, (as I can answer both for the veracity and knowledge of the person who told it me) believing it may entertain you, I will relate it.

He was born about the time of the Revolution. As soon as his mother was able to travel, (as I have said before) she followed her husband, taking this boy along with her. His beauty, when he grew up, was only equalled by his wit, politeness, and a thousand other perfections, which rendered him the admiration and delight of all his acquaintance. When he was old enough, he entered into the army, where his behaviour was answerable to all his other merits. One winter that his regiment was quartered in Normandy, he was lodged in the house of an officer, who had an only daughter, young, pretty, and ingenuous. You will guess the event of

this acquaintance : it was first a partiality, then a love, and that so ardent and open on his side, that the father thought fit to interpose and tell him, with all the respect due from an inferior, and all the warmth of an alarmed parent, that he knew his daughter undeserving of the honour of being his wife, but he thought her far too elevated to become his mistress. On this he was obliged to quit the house, but could not so easily give up his passion ; and finding equal returns from the young lady, he, to assure her of his faith and himself of hers, gave and received a contract. As this affair could not pass in silence, lord Clare (who was his colonel) and others of his relations sent word of it to my lady Middleton, who immediately ordered him to return home ; where she used so many arguments, threats, and persuasions (amongst others that he would ruin both the young lady and himself) that, after contending with them for two or

three years, he consented to write a letter, in which he stated that he believed it would be happier for her to think no more of a man whose friends were determined never to receive her. And that he might not be the hindrance of her fortune elsewhere, he returned her promise, and requested to have his. The lady immediately sent it, assuring him, that she had not taken it with any intention to injure him, whose happiness she had ever preferred to her own. She did not long outlive this event; for, falling into a consumption, she died within the year. The news of her death made such an impression on Mr. Middleton, that, from the most lively, he became the most melancholy of men; and though he lived some years afterwards, yet he never appeared happy. During the three last months of his life, he shut himself up from all company, and at last died of a fever that had no appearance of being mortal.

You see, dear madam, by the length of my discourse, that I do not mean to part soon with you whenever you come ; for I find myself on the last side of my paper, and have not yet asked one of those many things that I want to know. Write me word then, dear madam, what is going on where we no longer take a part, but where (safe in harbour) we see the ocean covered with floating vessels ; some sailing with auspicious gales, some struggling with adverse winds, some cruising, and some sinking. I am not out of humour with the world though retired from it, and therefore should take as much pleasure in hearing how it goes, as in seeing a new play ; where, though I am not an actor, I am just as attentive to the opening, progress, and catastrophe of the plot, as if I was.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

St. Leonard's Hill, Oct. ^{18,}_{29,} } 1738.

I AM afraid, dear madam, that you will repent of your goodness to me, when you find what an importunate correspondent it has drawn upon you. I was so much entertained with all the agreeable things which you said to me in my last visit, that I cannot help being in haste to place myself again by your fire-side, in hopes that you will again let me participate in the observations that you make in a country so famous, as France, for its gallantry and politeness.

I am charmed with St. Germain's, and have (in imagination) walked round its gallery and terrace with you. I wish you could have met Francis the First and his sister the queen of Navarre there. I fancy

you would have been better pleased with their conversation than with that of most you can meet with in France at present. I could pull Lewis the Fourteenth out of his grave for preferring the work of his own vanity to that venerable seat of his ancestors.

I never read any thing more moving than Mr. Middleton's story. Now and then an instance of that nature does occur, which convinces me that there is in reality such a thing as love, though the conduct of one's acquaintance would almost persuade us to rank it among the centaurs, satyrs, griffins, and other chimeras which had never any existence but in the brain of the poets. I hear sir Roger Burgoyne is another proof of its power; who is going to be married to lady Frances Montague. It seems he was in love with her at the time she was in love with count Nassau; but he concealed his passion from her with the utmost care. The anxiety

of his mind, however, threw him into so violent a fever that his life was despaired of. He made his will, and left her his whole estate; but upon his recovery he still remained silent; nor did he alter his conduct on the count's death, till she began to appear again in public. He then discovered the secret to some of his friends, and they told it to my lord Halifax, by whose persuasions, and on the merit of his perseverance, lady Frances has at last consented to marry him.

Your ladyship tells me that you wish to know what our acquaintances are saying and doing. I have not yet been amongst them; and when I do go, I shall be almost afraid to trouble you with a repetition of what you will certainly better hear from other persons, both as these have more frequent opportunities of conversing with them, and as they will be able to describe their proceedings in a much more agreeable way than myself.

Our forest* rings with the gallantries of his royal highness the duke †; and the kind assistance that lord Harry Beauclerk has lent him, in managing an interview with the daughter of a yeoman, who has about three hundred pounds a-year of his own, and no other child. The poor old man is so unambitious, that he has been almost mad at the apprehension of his daughter's preferment, and has sent her privately away.

I did not go up to Kensington on the coronation-day, but propose being there on the birth-day; and after that I believe I shall return no more hither till spring.

The prince and princess are to set out for the Bath to-morrow. I conclude that their journey will produce a good deal both of expense and news.

F. HARTFORD.

* Of Windsor.

† The duke of Cumberland, youngest son of king George II. born in April 1721.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Nov. ^{7,} } 1738.
 18, }

DEAR MADAM,

THIS humbly knocks at your dressing-room door, to welcome you to town, and to tell you that I am impatient to be informed that you got no cold at the birthday. I do not doubt but that you will find yourself as much improved and comforted with having been at that great assembly, as you were delighted with the finery, and lively conversation, when you were actually in it. Your observations, if they will not tire you in the repetition, you may safely send to me, without fear of their being again mentioned; for I write only to one person employed about the court, and she never says a word of what passes within the walls at St. James's.

Whether being present so often renders the subject too familiar to her to think it news to any one else, or whether she is desirous to change the scene, I do not know; but so it is.

As to me, the alteration of the weather has entirely given a new face to my affairs. My neighbours are all gone to Paris; and that beautiful landscape, which my window presented to me, is become a dreary waste. The ground is russet, the trees resemble skeletons, and the castles remind me of ghosts. Nay, even the river, that gave life to the whole, now only serves to exhale thick fogs, which give additional horror to the scene. Thus does all beauty change with time, and every glory fade, till time again renews them. Were one to philosophise, I think there cannot be a stronger proof of Providence and eternity, than the succession of the different seasons, and their operations. But however solitude and reflexion make

these thoughts my entertainment, I have no right to impose them on you, who know so much better how to think for yourself: I rather wish I could divert you with something new and foreign; but I have already told you that I made no stay except at St. Germain's. There, as you observe, it is some time since the queen of Navarre, and all that charming court (which I believe possessed more wit and merit than every other court, either before or since), resided. Could I have met them, Roch Dumain, or the princess Alphonsine, it might have given some spirit to my conversation, for at least twelve months after. But though my search for these in France is fruitless, perhaps you, in England, may have better luck; for I remember that the duchess of Suffolk and, Anne Bullen retired thither in the height of their gallantry: try if you can find resemblances of these, for both our amusements. Mine at present consists in read-

ing: and, as I have the strongest inclination to travel, though fixed at present to one spot of ground, I make the tour of the world in Gemelli's written one, which I intermix now and then with madame de Sevigné's letters.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

London, Nov. $\left. \begin{array}{l} 16, \\ 27, \end{array} \right\} 1738.$

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR letters will always be welcome to my dressing-room, and should never stay long enough to knock at the door, if I knew but of their coming; for I can, in the sincerity of my heart, assure you, that I pass no part of my time so agreeably as when employed in reading them. This perhaps may sound like a great many of the unmeaning civil things which both you and I have often heard; but, however it may resemble these in sound, it differs widely from them in sense; for I really feel all that the words import. As an evidence of it, I will inform you that there scarcely passes a day, in which I do not read them more than once. Judge then,

my dear lady Pomfret, whether I do not justly regret my own want of power to make you any returns for the entertainment that your letters always afford me.

I was at court on the birth-day. There were more people than I expected, but fewer of our fellow-servants than one would naturally have supposed. The duchess of Richmond, lady Albemarle, and lady Bristol, were the whole of the bed-chamber ladies, except myself; Mrs. Titchbourne and Mrs. Selwyn were the only bedchamber women; and Mrs. Lovelace, Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Dyve, were all the maids of honour who appeared. I will not enter into a detail of the finery; but, that you may judge of it in the general, will give one instance as a specimen of the whole; and that is in the princess Amelia, who had on a yellow and silver, which cost thirty shillings a yard. I did not go at night, but Betty* was there, and told me that the duke could get only

six couple for country dances. I think all the royal family look well and cheerful.

I have so bad a cough that I am to be bled in an hour's time. I hope you escape better in France, though I find, by your letter, that even there the winter has produced a melancholy change in the face of nature. I entirely agree with your philosophy, that these changes are a proof (among innumerable others) of providence and eternity, and serve to reconcile us to a common circumstance, which, without such assurances, we should find it difficult to account for, unless we distrusted the goodness of the Divine Being; and that is, often finding people of the greatest merit ill used by Fortune, whilst others, who are the most worthless, enjoy an un-

* Lady Elizabeth Seymour, the daughter of lady Hartford, afterwards married to sir Hugh Smithson, bart.; who, in the year 1766, was created duke of Northumberland.

interrupted course of prosperity. It however carries its comfort along with it, and tells us, in the strongest terms, that a day will come when the ways of Providence will be cleared up. I am afraid you will think I have forgot that I am writing a letter, and that I fancy myself inditing a sermon; but the many solitary hours I pass in a day, and the melancholy employment of attending a person* in his sufferings, to whom I owe every happiness I enjoy, cannot furnish me with many smiling ideas relating to this world.

I wish I could find any body that resembled Anne Bullen or the duchess of Suffolk; if I do meet with any such resemblances you shall certainly share in the entertainment they afford me.

I am glad you are reading madame de Sevigné's letters, because I have found great pleasure in them, and have read

* Lord Hartford.

them all several times; but I love those best that are dated from Rochers and Livry; for I am more interested in what particularly relates to herself, than in what was, at that time, the news of Paris.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Dec. $\left. \begin{smallmatrix} 2, \\ 13, \end{smallmatrix} \right\} 1738.$

SMALL encouragement is necessary to make people follow their own inclinations; and besides, your ladyship gives me such ample rewards, that, if I did not put some restraint on mine, I fear at last you would be obliged to desire me. Although I am not sufficiently vain to think that I merit half the kind things you say of me, yet I should be very ungrateful to doubt the kindness that produces them, and exceedingly cruel to myself were I to endeavour to disbelieve what afford me so much pleasure. There is now, dear madam, no reason to dissemble; and if there were, I think, in that art, that you have no greater genius than myself. The place once common to us both, made it our mutual in-

terest to be easy with each other ; but now, as the scene is changed, and lady Hartford and lady Pomfret have no other characters to sustain than what those names import, their communications with each other can only proceed from their natural dispositions.

Your reflexions on the seemingly unequal distributions of Providence, remind me of what passed between Tamerlane and Bajazet, when the latter was brought before his conqueror in chains. Tamerlane, looking steadfastly at him, burst into a laugh ; on which the Turk replied, with some emotion, “ Do not laugh, Tamerlane, because I am a slave. It was God, and not thou, who vanquished me ; and he has the power to undo to-morrow, what he did to-day.” The other answered, with more seriousness, “ It is not at thy misfortunes that I laugh. I know that God is the governor of all, depressing, and exalting, when, and whom, he pleases :

but I laughed to think in how little account kingdoms are held with the Almighty, since he bestows them on such a squinter as thou, and on such a halting cripple as myself." And indeed, if we consider the matter fairly, few people will be found with less favours from Providence than they know how to make use of; and of the many unfortunate, I fear the greatest number are those who make themselves so. For the rest, let us agree with Tamerlane, that what we in this world esteem most, is in his eyes, who knows the real worth of things, of no esteem at all.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Nov. 23, O. S., 1738.

I HAVE had the pleasure of seeing, at Rysbach's, a busto of our ever-regretted mistress*, so like her (except a little too much height in the nose) that I could not look upon it without feeling a return of that tender concern which we each experienced this time twelve months, with as much truth as any that were in her service, though possibly with more silence. The recollection was so strongly on my spirits all Sunday and Monday, that I was downright ill, and had, in imagination, much conversation with you on the subject. During both those days, I was almost per-

* Caroline, queen of George the Second, who died on the 20th of November, 1737.

suaded that you and I were again placed on each side the fire, in the little waiting-room at St. James's, where we sat that fatal Sunday night which robbed the world of one whose loss there is every day greater cause to lament, and on whom I can never think without a sigh. I have seen none of our old fellow-servants, since I wrote last (except Mrs. Lovelace), nor any body else that could inform me of any thing worth repetition.

I am at present deeply engaged in the works of monsieur la Motte le Vayer. Amongst many other things, he drew up a plan for the education of Lewis the Fourteenth. I was particularly pleased with the commendation he gives to the asseveration constantly used by Charles the Fifth, "*upon the faith of an honest man;*" which he says he should have relied much more on, than if he had brought in his royalty to affirm what he wished should

be believed. He recommends it to the persons entrusted with the education of Lewis to instil the same regard for that character in him.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Dec. $\left. \begin{smallmatrix} 20, \\ 31, \end{smallmatrix} \right\} 1738.$

THOUGH not at Rysbach's, I had the visage of the poor queen before my eyes all those days that were the revolution of that melancholy scene, in which my only consolation was to be with you, and indulge, in imagination, a repetition of what each of us felt. I very well remember that we were alike affected; and I have often reflected since, in explaining many things which had passed, how great a conformity there was found between us, and how impossible it was for hearts made like ours not to receive the same impressions for one so indisputably the most amiable mistress that ever adorned a court, and so fitted to charm in society, that it was impossible not to grudge her

to that life which involved her in cares, and encompassed her with such a cloud of different people, that her real lustre could not always reach those who perhaps had the truest pleasure in it. But whatever was, or might have been, is now no more. The highest and the lowest have the same entrance into life, and are the same when they leave it.

Though I am not acquainted with the writings of monsieur la Motte le Vayer, I doubt not their merit, since you can take pleasure in them; and must acknowledge there is great force in what he says of the asseveration of Charles the Fifth: yet allow me to observe to you, that I think the asseveration of his contemporary, Francis the First, more complete. It was, "*on the word of a gentleman.*" Honesty and honour, like morality and christianity, though each of the latter is built on the former, yet it highly improves it; and a person may be very honest, and yet still do nothing

worth notice ; whereas, to acquire the second character, he must attempt to make others happy, even to the foregoing of his own interest, when that is inconsistent with what he has engaged to perform, or when the merits of the case require it of him. In short, this induces him to do various things with pleasure, which, had he not a greatness of soul, would be altogether repugnant to him. The conduct of these two princes was answerable to the distinction of expression between them : Charles, exacting the severest terms of the king of France, when his prisoner, by the right of conquest ; and Francis, not only permitting him to pass through his dominions, when his affairs required it, but rejecting, with contempt, the remonstrance of those who would have urged him to take advantage in his turn of the emperor's distress.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

December ^{15,}_{26,} } 1738.

YOU do me but justice, dear madam, in believing that art has no share in the pleasure which I profess to receive in hearing from you ; and, as a proof that I have neither talents nor inclination to dissemble, I will add a truth which bears no resemblance to flattery, and is at the same time an abasing thought for myself. This is, that I did not set a sufficient value on the opportunities which our situation in the queen's family afforded of conversing with you, till it was almost too late for me to reap the advantage of them. However, like most other follies, it has left me the

* This is the answer to the letter p. 30.

remorse which always attends the neglecting of a happiness which has been once within one's reach, and which one learns to esteem when it is so no longer.

I have been only once at the drawing-room since I wrote last, and then I had the honour (perhaps I ought to say pleasure) of playing with the princess Amelia. But when one has lived so long in the country as to become a stranger to the modes in vogue, one does not immediately enter into a taste for them; at least such is my case; and I cannot discover their charms so easily as a person of more polite genius undoubtedly would do. My dressing-room is as solitary as ever; so you may believe I hear little of what passes in the town; and the little I do hear does not inspire me with any curiosity to be better informed. I often wish your ladyship could be in it for an hour or two; for I could say a great deal to you by word of mouth, which I cannot

venture to insert in a letter, lest some one should have the curiosity to open it before it reaches you.

The restraint that you say you lay upon your inclination with respect to writing, is a great mortification, and ought to be an example to me; but you see that it is not such, or else I should not have troubled you again so soon. Nay, I am so unreasonable, that, whilst I confess that six lines of your writing are more than a reward for any thing I can write, I could not help repining, when I opened your last letter, at the great space betwixt the lines. Although my confinement with my lord Hartford has prevented me from going often to St. James's, I have not been a stranger to all courts; for I have just been reading the three last *tomes* of the *Anecdotes of the Court of Philip August*. I cannot say that they diverted me so well as the three first; but possibly the fault is

in my taste, which may have lost part of its relish for courts in general.

The prince of Wales met the duke and princesses at the play this night was seven-night; and, though the whole town had talked of it for three days before, it seems that the princesses were entirely ignorant of his design of being there. They had not the satisfaction of being long in sight of each other, for the princess Caroline fainted, and dropped off her chair, before she had been ten minutes in the house. She was carried into the green-room, where the tenderness of the princess Amelia for her sister, had, I am told, the same effect upon her that the heat of the house had on the princess Caroline. The duke was the only one who stayed out the play; and I have heard that his polite behaviour was commended by every person that was there.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Jan. 10, N. S., 1739.

To be regretted, is by some thought the most exalted state in love or friendship, since it proves the affection to be present when the object is removed. As you see I am not ignorant of the merit of that sentiment in general, so I hope you do not believe me so stupid as not to put a double value upon it, when declared in favour of myself. I cannot tell you how much I am pleased with your sincerity, in acknowledging that I was not always so happy as I am now in your good opinion. I knew it very well; but, content to have conquered your dislike, I thought it too nice a subject to touch upon. I must confess that you are as much my superior in

delicacy of soul, as in every thing else; for whilst there remained any thought respecting each other unexplained, though we were not so insincere as to say what was not true, yet we could not be quite sincere without telling all that was. And to follow so good an example, I will freely confess, though I am truly and sorrowfully sensible of the want of your company, that I do not grieve that our friendship did not begin sooner; since I am certain it would have excited the good-nature of a great many people, though they had not cared one farthing for either of us, to have made it their business, by a thousand lies on both sides, to inform us how dangerous a person each was to the other, and how unfit for a friend. Now, though parted, we may in peace communicate our thoughts; we may reason, reflect, and become as much acquainted with each other's hearts as we please; not but I

must own that a little verbal converse, now and then, would be a great addition to one's satisfaction; and I have at this time an affair that would entertain an hour or two very well: but, besides the reasons which your ladyship gives for not putting such things in writing, I have another, which is this, that my pen is unequal to the theme; it is so high, and so low, that — I shall think no more about it.

I thank you, dear madam, for your theatrical history: it made me laugh heartily; and I wish there were any incidents in my knowledge that could give you the same diversion; but as I am not at present where I can hope to contribute to your amusement, I will only add, that, whenever I am so, you shall be sure to have the first fruits of it; both as these are your due, by accepting with so much goodness so trifling a correspondence;

and as my inclination so strongly leads
me, in every instance in my power, to
shew how much I am

Your Ladyship's

Most faithful friend,

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

London, Jan. 8, } 1739.
 19, }

I AM very happy if any thing which I can do, convinces you, dear madam, of the sincerity of my sentiments towards you. Indeed I hope, if I have ever so little else to recommend me, that I may venture to boast of the truth of my heart, which, without reserve, freely opens to receive so valuable a friend as your goodness offers me; and may I never be so unhappy as to do any thing to forfeit, what I know so well how to esteem! I fancy I guess at the history which you say your pen is unequal to: perhaps it is the very same that made me say I longed to converse verbally with you. If I am right, I answered to it exactly as I fancied you would have wished me to do; and I hope I was not

out, unless, possibly, I might express more warmth at the account of the proceedings of the party here, than you would have thought it worth while to do.

I find myself every day better pleased with the retirement that we are each cast into. You will laugh at my talking of being retired in London; but I really am so as much as you can be at Monts; and I believe I shall never again desire to act more in public, unless either the people or myself alter extremely.

We had the most extraordinary weather last week that I ever knew: at the same time that it was inexpressibly cold, a poor post-boy, on Monday, was struck blind with lightning betwixt Stilton and Huntingdon; and on Wednesday we had a deep snow in the morning; and in the middle of that night the most violent storm of thunder, lightning, wind, and rain, that I believe was ever known in England. We are now again covered

with snow, and the whole town (at least Grosvenor-street, the only part I have seen) looks as if it were built of sugar.

I hear that the princess Amelia was on Banstead Downs during all the rain on Wednesday, engaged in a fox-chase. It is a happy thing to have so robust a constitution, as to receive no injury from such Amazonian entertainments; and, if the poor queen were not too late an instance of the contrary, I should begin to fancy that princesses were not of the same composition with their inferiors. There is a report that my lady Bateman is to be made lady of the bedchamber to some or other of the royal family; but, unless there be a new establishment, or she be added as a supernumerary, I see no room for her. The duke of Marlborough lost seven hundred pounds on Twelfth-night, which was all that was considerable: the duchess of Dorset and lady Betty Germain both played. Lady Caroline Sack-

ville is going to be married to an Irish gentleman of great estate, whose name is Damer.

I find it is in vain for me ever to fancy I shall write you a short letter : I am just as unwilling to lay down my pen as I could be to resolve upon making my courtesy, and so putting an end to my visit, if I were happy enough to be within reach of making you one.

But I must release you now, lest you should think I fancy myself under a necessity of always sending you a book instead of a letter. My lord Pomfret and all your family have the compliments of mine ; and I am happy in your permission to sign myself, what (if I know my heart) I truly am,

Dear Madam,

Your Ladyship's

Most faithful friend and

Obedient humble servant,

FRANCES HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Jan. 21, O. S., 1739.

I SUPPOSE that you will soon begin to feel the approaches of spring; for I think I have been told that the winters are not so long in France as with us. Your prospect, therefore, will soon resume its beauties, and the sun exhale the fogs, which, during the late dark months, have obscured the Seine.

On Saturday my lord Townshend * gave up the jewel-office, and more changes

* Lord Townshend was summoned to the house of peers in the year 1723, during the life-time of his father, by the title of baron Lynne. In 1730 he was appointed lord-lieutenant of the county of Norfolk: he resigned this office, and that of treasurer of his majesty's jewels, on succeeding to his father's honours and estate.

are spoken of; but whether there are any grounds for the report, I cannot tell. You know that I was not often well informed of what were passing, even when my employment called me into the very midst of the crowd who are most busied in scheming for them, and therefore you will easily believe that I am content to be as ignorant of them now, as if I lived in the most distant part of Europe.

You have reason to be glad that I am not in possession either of the hippogriff or any of madame Daunois's fairy chariots. If I were, I am afraid you would find me a very troublesome visitor, since scarcely a day passes over my head in which I do not want to talk over a hundred things with you. When I am reading I often stop short, and fancy I should like to ask your opinion of some passages in my book. This has been particularly the case lately, in going through some dialogues, entitled "The World unmasked, or the Philo-

sopher the greatest Cheat;" to which are added some reveries, and fourteen letters. I own they have pleased me, but I could wish to have your judgement to confirm me in my sentiments.

Carte has published two volumes of letters which were written in the time of the great rebellion. Among these there is one from king Charles the First to the duke of Ormond, that gives me a worse opinion of his honesty, than all the things that Oldmixon, and the other compilers of libels, have ever written respecting him.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Monts, Feb. 14, N. S., 1739.

I BELIEVE you have the power of divining my thoughts, for I certainly did smile at the expression in your letter of our both living retired, when at that time I was in Paris, in the midst of balls, treats, operas, and masquerades, out all night, and asleep all the morning. From this life of bustle I am returned to Monts, and will give you as good an account as my memory will allow me of the noisy vision; for such it appears to me, who now find myself, as if just awake, between my window and my chimney, in silent conversation with my books and writing-table.

* This was written in answer to the two last letters.

Paris is certainly a fine town, and the generality of people there live with more gaiety than those of London. The public diversions, however, are inferior to ours; the theatres are less, ill shaped, and worse ornamented; and though their comedians excel, their music is below that of a dog-kennel. To their masquerades they admit the meanest people; and the greatest are so ill drest, that they rather resemble the crowd of a mob, than a civil assembly. As to the more private entertainments, in particular houses (of which we partook many times, given both by the French and English established here), they are easy, elegant, and have an air of magnificence not common in our country. The dress of the company makes a great shew; and I have been at several balls, where, in this respect, they far out-shone some of our latter birth-days. The different coloured furs with which they trim

their clothes in winter, have a nobler appearance than one can imagine without seeing them.

But, to give you an instance of true French splendor, I must conduct you to Versailles, the fine apartments of which, for above these twenty years, have rather been looked upon as the monument of the dead Lewis, than the court of the living one. But all things have their period; and love, almighty love, has roused the sleeping monarch, to make out my former comparison and shew him Silvio complete. He is, to madame De Mailly, the most tender and most submissive of men. He frequents and he gives entertainments: and as I was a spectator at his majesty's masquerade, I must say I never saw a more glorious sight than his palace, when lighted up with forty thousand wax candles. There never was a greater plenty of fine things to eat and drink, nor better order in the

distribution of them ; and the constant attendance to supply light and food, as each diminished, was admirable.

You will fancy, by what I have said, that I spent my whole time at Paris in these kinds of amusements—and in reality I had not much for any thing else ; yet I did not omit seeing the Palais Royal, and what remains of the late regent's pictures, his son having destroyed many fine ones, and new dressed others that were indecent : however, there are sufficient left to make it the best collection in Europe. I was also at the house of an old man * who sells prints and drawings, and whose family, for three generations, have made it their business to collect all that is curious in that way. He is a good historian, and a great connoisseur ; and will only part with duplicates ; among which I could not

* Monsieur Mariette, whose fine collection was dispersed by public auction a few years since.

persuade him to reckon a book of original drawings of the portraits of Francis the First and all the considerable personages, male and female, of his court, or I would have sent them as a present to you.

You do me great honour, and, what is yet better, you give me great pleasure, dear madam, in wishing me near you when you read ; and could wishes avail, I should not be at so great a distance from so valuable a friend as at present. I must however tell you, that, except my children, there are not three other persons in England who could induce me to think of returning thither. Such is my rambling disposition, that I am contented to carry those whom I love in my head and heart, as the ancients placed their household gods to guard and grace their dwellings.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET *.

London, Jan. $\left. \begin{smallmatrix} 1, \\ 12, \end{smallmatrix} \right\} 1739.$

I GRANT you, dear madam, that Francis the First's asseveration had, in his age, all the advantage you mention over that of Charles the Fifth: but as I think that you and I have agreed that his court was not exactly like all others since, may it not be possible that "*the word of a gentleman,*" under his reign, might import something more than is understood from that expression by those of a more modern date? I confess it ought always to have the same meaning, through every age; but custom, and length of time, often make great alteration in the value of things.

I shall be glad to know whether you have

* Answer to the letter p. 36.

received my last letter, in which I have said how much I want to converse with you by word of mouth, since I fancied that I had many things to tell you which I could not well put into a letter; and yet I have inserted more in that than I should choose any one to see except yourself.

I have just been reading four acts of a new tragedy, which is nearly ready for the stage: but it is said that Mr. Fleetwood has promised so many authors already, that it probably must be deferred to another year. This I am sorry for, because I know of no play superior to it, that has been brought upon the stage since I can remember. It is written by Brooke, the author of "Universal Beauty." The story is that of Gustavus Ericson Vasa, who delivered Sweden from the tyranny of the Danes; and it is taken from Vertot's History of the Revolutions of that country. I never read finer drawn characters than those of his hero and heroine, nor can

virtue be possibly set in a more amiable light than it is through the whole of this play: there are some paintings in it that fall very little short of those of Shakespear.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Monts, Feb. 25, N. S., 1739.

I AM very sorry that so rare a thing as a good play in these days, should meet with any discouragement, or indeed depend on such a creature's will as Mr. Fleetwood. This is certainly the most perfect kind of entertainment, when well performed, that ever was contrived: the fancy is amused, the manners are formed, and the mind is instructed, at the same time; and, by an agreeable conceit, we are brought into the company of those persons, the reading of whose lives and actions had before excited our admiration or disdain, our love or anger, and most commonly our curiosity to know more of them than the book could tell us. Brooke's choosing his hero out of modern history, is, in my mind, no small

recommendation of his performance ; since, besides that the ancients afford no story that is not, by often telling, grown tiresome, the world has been so changed by the extirpation of the pagan theology, and the introduction of the Gothic government (from which all the modern nations derive theirs), that we are rendered almost another species ; and doubtless the customs, actions, and fortunes, that most resemble our own, must be the most interesting to us. On this account it is that I have often wondered why so many of our English heroes should lie forgotten, when we have had such a number of English poets capable of doing justice to their memories ; for, except Shakespear, I know of none that deserve that title who have attempted any part of our history, subsequent to the Conquest, which he left untouched ; and surely there is ample field in the period before his plays commence. What instance of conjugal love can exceed that of Edward the

First and his queen? What bravery, that of Cœur de Lion? What policy and wisdom, that of John of Gaunt in Spain? And what politeness, love, courage, honour, and filial affection, that of the Black Prince? besides innumerable other subjects full of entertaining incidents, and various turns of fate. And I cannot help being out of patience with Mr. Dryden, who, next to Shakespear, pleases me best, to see him hunt the extremest corners of the earth for his heroes; and though neither the inhabitants of Asia, Africa, Europe, nor America, are excluded his notice, yet he has not bestowed one scene on England, except in his opera of King Arthur, whose story is almost as fabulous as the spirits he has raised to adorn it. Mr. Rowe is indeed an exception to what I at first said, well meriting the name both of a poet and an Englishman.

You will find, dear madam, by this dissertation, that I have not renounced,

though I have left, my country, but can like France without becoming French. To tell you the truth, what makes me so strong in this way of thinking, is the reading of the French plays, which revive in me a more lively remembrance of the beauties of our own; as the abominable howling in their operas, gives me a taste for the Italian music which I never had before.

The spring does not advance so much as you imagine, since this country is very little more south than some parts of England; and some months must elapse before our prospect regains the beauty it possessed, when it charmed us enough to make a contract with it for two years and a quarter. You have so thoroughly convinced me of the strength and constancy of your kindness for me, that I should fear to offend you if I made excuses for the length and frequency of my letters, since, between friends, nothing can be more

agreeable than such a commerce, the returns of which never come so soon as desired, and are always attended with the utmost impatience by

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

London, Feb. 14, O. S., 1739.

I AM angry at myself, dear madam, that I cannot find words to express the pleasure I receive from your letters: two lines, which I have somewhere read, describe my case on this subject exactly:

My heart in lowly words reveals,

And wrongs, the sentiments it feels.

Whenever I can entertain a hope of hearing from you, I inquire after the French mail as if I were carrying on a correspondence in order to steal the dauphin, and actually listen to every double knock at the door, in hopes of the post-man,

* This is the answer to the letter p. 54.

with more attention than I ever did to an opera.

I am charmed with the metamorphosis of your monarch; but I would not venture to mention the complaisance and tenderness it has produced, not even in my bed-chamber, lest the birds of the air should carry the matter, and raise clouds upon the most serene and thoughtless face I know, or occasion a reflexion like that of Helena, in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*:

How happy some o'er other some may be,
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.

Though your life at Paris was very gay, and the masquerade at Versailles certainly a most magnificent shew, I would rather have attended you to the virtuoso who is in possession of the book of drawings of Francis the First's court. I am not sure that, if he would have parted with it, I could have been more sensibly pleased to receive it, than I am with the kindness

that could inspire you with a thought of sending it to me.

I would fain flatter myself that there is some degree of sympathy between us; for whilst you were seeing balls, operas, and assemblies in Paris, I had twice or thrice five tables at cards in my own house, besides other company who did not play, and I have as often been engaged out where there was as numerous an assemblage.

Mr. Mallet's new tragedy of Mustapha has been twice acted with great applause. I have neither seen nor read it, but I hear it so much commended, that, as soon as it is printed, I will endeavour to find some means of conveying it to you, as also that of Gustavus Vasa, which I now find is to come next upon the stage.

To shew you my inclination to imitate you, though at ever so awkward a distance, I am seized with a desire of travelling; but as my person is a great hindrance to my

doing it in reality, I have got Pietro della Valle's Italian book of Travels, to conduct me into Turkey, Persia, &c., in imagination. Since I have been reading this work I have often wished to sit with you in a chiosk, or that we should walk together in some of those beautiful gardens from whence there is so fine a view of the Bosphorus. If we were there, I believe, if your curiosity prompted you to accompany a caravan to Mecca, or to visit the pyramids of Egypt, I could not resist being of the party.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

London, Feb. 22, O. S., 1739.

I COULD not resolve to send Mustapha without a line to introduce him to your dressing-room. I have not yet had time to read a line of this play, so cannot give you my own thoughts upon it, but I hear other people say it has many party strokes. Gustavus Vasa is to come next upon the stage, and I hope will come off with success, though the author has no friends to support it, as Mr. Mallet had for his.

A-propos of Gustavus: I must tell you a particular of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, which I had from sir William Wyndham, and which I think is not mentioned in any of the accounts of his life. He

* This is the answer to the letter p. 62.

dreamed one night that he was upon a large plain, about the middle of which there was an extremely high hill, of a round form—its ascent prodigiously difficult, being almost perpendicular, and at the top of it was a rock *escarpée* of great height. Whilst he was looking upon this, he saw a man climbing up it, whom he knew to be Gustavus Vasa: this person got to the top of the hill, but then disappeared, without getting upon the rock. He then saw a second man, who not only climbed up the hill, but got a little way upon the rock; when his foot slipped and he fell to the bottom: the king went nearer, and found him to be Charles Vasa. A third person came, and got up the hill, and very near to the top of the rock; but he likewise, missing his footing, fell down: the king knew this to be Gustavus Adolphus. Surprised at the ill success of these three heroes, he resolved to try whether he could not himself have better fortune. He accordingly attempted it,

and not only climbed up the hill, but to the very summit of the rock, where he planted the standard of Sweden.

I own that this sounds very like a vision invented *à plaisir*; but sir William Wyndham assures me that he was told it by a person whom he knew very well, and who was a very unlikely man to contrive such a fiction: this person said that Charles constantly affirmed it. If you have heard this story before, I ought to beg pardon for troubling you with a repetition of it; but you will pardon me, since I do not know but it may be as new to you as it was to me.

I think you in the right, to be angry with our poets for neglecting so many fine subjects as the English history affords for the theatre; and am glad I can inform you, that a subject named in your last will appear at the play-house in Covent Garden in about a fortnight: it is the history of Edward the First and his queen, written

by Mr. Thomson. I am told, that, if Gustavus meets with success, the author designs to write the history of the siege of Calais, by Edward the Third; where, you know, the queen begged the lives of six of the citizens, who were ordered to come barefoot, and in their shirts, with halters about their necks.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Monts, March 13, N. S. 1739.

As you have been so good as to send me Mustapha, I am very impatient for its arrival; and I intend to return you, for it, a celebrated piece performed here, of the same kind, called Mahomet the Second: this is not yet printed, but I hear it universally applauded.

I was extremely entertained with the Dream of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, which I had never before heard. It is too much the fault of historians to neglect those little incidents, that serve to enliven and raise reflexions in reading their books, which can never be produced by a dry relation of facts only. For my own part,

* In answer to the last letter.

I must confess that I always want to know as much how a great person thought and spoke, as what he did ; and, to do justice to the French, they as much excel us in writing history, as they are inferior to us in poetry—and that chiefly from their admitting private characters into their historical works.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

London, March ^{16,}_{27,} } 1739.

OUR English bards have a subject for panegyric and prophecy, in the princess of Wales having been brought to bed of a son yesterday at three o'clock. She was at the play the night before.

My lord Selkirk died yesterday morning; and his will cannot be found, to the great sorrow of all the persons who fancied they were remembered in it. Thus goes the world! some are born into it, whilst others are giving it a melancholy farewell, and grieving to resign possessions which their survivors are impatient to inherit.

By an odd caprice of Fortune, I am afraid Gustavus Vasa will not be licensed

* In answer to the last letter.

at last: though I own there does not appear to me to be half so much in it liable to objection, as in Mustapha; and, however strange it may appear, it is said that the very people commend it that refuse it their suffrage to be brought upon the stage.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Monts, April 15, N. S., 1739.

Now, dear madam, I will acquaint you with the intended motions of your humble servant : we go first to Lyons ; and then, either over the Alps, or from Marseilles by sea, to Italy. Which of the two last plans is to be adopted, must remain undetermined till we accomplish the first. We leave this place on Friday the twenty-fourth, N. S.

Your present of Mustapha (for which I return you my thanks) came to me last week at Paris. I think the malice that it contains is more visible than its wit ; and I remember a play, written by Roger

* In answer to the last letter.

earl of Orrery, on the same subject, in rhyme, that pleased me much better.

If my journey to Lyons yields any thing worth communicating, you shall hear from me whilst I stay there, or at least as soon as I am settled in Italy.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Lyons, May 9, N. S., 1739.

As the Lyonois are certainly subject enough for one letter; and as I promised, if I found them so, to trouble you with one; so, dear madam, I am preparing (for want of power to do better) to send you a bad copy of a very fine original.

At the joining of the two beautiful rivers, the Rhône and the Saone (far superior to the Seine, and little inferior to the Thames), Lucius Manutius Plancus built the city of Lyons*, soon after the death of Julius Cesar. Immediately from its first foundation it became a place of great dignity and resort; all the gold and silver for the province of Gaul being not only

* Lugdunum.

coined here, but also produced from the mines in the neighbourhood ; nor is the country yet so entirely exhausted, but that there are frequent appearances of these metals, which, when the rivers overflow their banks, are cast up in the sand. The emperor Augustus, with a most splendid court, made Lyons his residence for three years; and, after his return to Rome, for four more. The sixty nations who kept their fairs and assemblies at Lyons, erected here, at their joint expense, in honour of that emperor, the celebrated altar, or rather temple, where Caligula, ten years after, founded prizes for eloquence and poetry.

Notwithstanding the many changes of government, and desolations both by fire and the sword, that have taken place, there are still great remains of the former glory of Lyons: as, the baths of Marc Anthony; the theatre; the aqueduct; and the great road made by Agrippa, which, having its

centre here, parted the whole province into four great divisions, and on the side of which

A temple stood, rever'd through ev'ry age,
 Unhurt by time, and spar'd by hostile rage.
 For sixteen hundred years the solemn gloom,
 Known and renown'd, was call'd the *Lovers' Tomb*.
 But now no more this object charms our eyes ;
 For trading cits, who generous thoughts despise,
 In council met, the monument deface :—
 So much does interest, more than war, debase.

I have chosen to transcribe these verses from a window in the room where I dine ; because, in a foreign country, one is very glad to meet with any thing of one's own : otherwise I might have told you in prose, that the piece of antiquity they speak of was “ *le tombeau des deux amants*,” which has given birth to many learned dissertations. Some say that it was that of Herod and Herodias, who were banished hither : some, of two lovers who, after a long absence, died for joy at the sight of

each other; and others have attributed it to the gratitude of two slaves, who, being enfranchised by their masters, built them this monument: but the latest opinion, which is strengthened by an inscription found not long ago, is, that a brother raised it to the memory of his sister; and that their names, only, were *Amandas*. Whatever it was, the city magistrates, in the year 1707, ordered it to be demolished.

The city, as it now is, I really think the prettiest I ever saw. The Saone runs through the middle of it, over which are three bridges. On one side the houses are built along a very steep but fruitful hill: and to me, that am on the other side, they make the most beautiful prospect imaginable; for, after several ranges one above another, the vineyards, the fields, and trees, intermixed with old ruins and convents, crown the very summit of it. As to living, there is great plenty of every thing, and good wine; but nothing cheap. The inhabitants

have an opera, and sometimes a play. There are many elegant houses, and very considerable people inhabit them. The Place Royale is a very fine square, larger than most in London. A statue of Lewis the Fourteenth on horseback is placed in the centre of it; on each side is a fountain; and there are walks all round. Besides these walks, there are the ramparts, which overlook the Rhône; where stands the Academy, that is supposed to have the best governor of any in France. From hence, in a few days, we shall set out for Marseilles; and as I hope to find still greater variety in this journey, it is probable you may be troubled with me once again before I leave France.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Marseilles, May 28, N. S., 1739.

WHETHER it is that I have lived so long under an arbitrary government as to grow used to it, I don't know ; but I am under no apprehensions concerning the dey of Algiers, and only wait for a fair wind to embark for Nice or Genoa. But, before I tell you what I am about to do, I think it would be more regular to tell you what I have done.

Having crossed the Rhône at Lyons, we entered Dauphiné (at this time of the year the most agreeable and wonderful country I ever was in) through a labyrinth of rocks that seemed to touch the clouds. We went all the way on a gravel walk, by the side of green meadows and corn-fields ; the Rhône often breaking into the view, and

then again being lost. These, with the ruins of former towns and castles every where dispersed, form some of the finest landscapes that can be drawn. Vienne was once the capital of this province ; it stands on the edge of the river, that forms a large basin before it, and at the foot of a vast rock. From this country we entered that of Provence ; which, though less beautiful to the eye, is infinitely finer to consider. The roads are still good. The common trees, of which there are great plenty, are mulberries, olives, almonds, and figs : the hedges are of pomegranates ; and the herbage is lavender, thyme, and rosemary. We passed through the principality of Orange, and the county of Avignon. I staid a whole day at Avignon ; which is a place very well worth seeing, both for the town itself, and the beauty and antiquities of the churches. In one of these there is, level with the pavement, a flat stone, bearing an engraved figure of a woman ; and

at the head of it, on the wall, is an escutcheon of a single coat of arms, the field gules, charged with a star argent. This is the tomb of Laura de Sade, so celebrated by the love and poetry of Petrarch, who composed near four hundred songs in her praise. She died in 1348, at the age of thirty-four. When Francis the First was in this city, he ordered her grave to be opened, having a curiosity to see what were the remains of so famous a person. A small box was found, which contained some verses written with Petrarch's own hand: and a medal in lead; the impression of a woman on one side, and on the other the letters M. L. M. J., to signify, in Italian, *Madona Laura morta jace*. The king had all these returned to the same place; honouring her monument with this epitaph, of his own composing:

En petit compris vous pouvez voir
Ce qui comprend beaucoup par renommée.

Plume, labeur, la langue, et le devoir,
 Furent vaincus par l'aimant de l'aimée.
 O gentille ame ! étant toute estimée !
 Qui te pourra loüer qu'en se taisant ?
 Car la parole est toujours réprimée
 Quand le sujet surmonte le disant.

Our next stop was at Aix ; a very pleasant town, where we met with some English persons. From thence we came to Marseilles. The intendant, and indeed all the company (in which are several people of quality, especially amongst the officers), have been extremely attentive to us. They armed a galley for our diversion : this is a very fine sight, but neither my time nor paper will allow me to enter into the description of it at present.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

London, March ^{6,}_{13,} } 1739.

'Tis an age since I heard from you, my dear lady Pomfret, and I cannot resolve to keep silence any longer : especially as I have an opportunity of sending a letter that does not run the hazard of being opened before it reaches you ; for it comes by an exempt* in my lord's troop, who is a very honest man. He is only to pass a week at Paris ; and if you have any commands in England, he will be very proud to execute them at his return. I was yesterday at St. James's, to take my leave ; for I go down to Windsor Forest on Monday. To shew you that I have no matters of much importance to employ

* An officer in the horse guards.

my eloquence in the drawing-room, the princess Amelia was reduced to the necessity of asking me whether my jewels were new. This question arose either from want of conversation, or else to prove to me how completely she had forgotten all that related to me at the time I served the queen.

This has been a very angry session of parliament; and, I own, the conduct of the patriots, in abandoning the houses, seems to me a frightful omen. I can hardly think they would do so much without designing to do more; and then, what may not the consequence be?

Mr. Thomson's play of Edward and Eleonora has met with the same fate as Gustavus Vasa, in being forbidden. I think, all the world seem in worse humour than ever I saw them in before; or else I look through smoked glasses—which I really believe is not the case, for I never felt my

own house more peaceful than it is at this hour.

If you have no better weather in France than we have here, I may defer my congratulations upon the return of the spring for some time longer. We have snow and hail every day; and the leaves that were budded, wither and drop from the trees, as if it were autumn. I fancy we must be under some mistake about the season of the year, or else that spring and summer are commanded to resign their share of it to the reign of winter. I never remember more piercing cold than we had during all the latter part of last month, and even continue to have at this time.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

MR. Pope has thought fit to publish a new volume of poems. It contains his Sober Advice, Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight, his Epistle to Augustus, and several things which he had sold singly before. There are also an epitaph on the late duke of Buckingham, and two or three epigrams. As a specimen, I send you one, which is prefaced with this pompous title: "Engraved on the collar of a dog which I gave to his royal highness:"

"I am his highness' dog at Kew:—

"Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?"

Does it not remind you of one of a more ancient date, which I believe is repeated in all the nurseries in England?

* In answer to her last two, p. 81 and 86.

Bow, wow, wow, wow !

Whose dog art thou ? &c.

I do not infer from hence that Mr. Pope finds himself returning into childhood, and therefore imitates the venerable author of the last, in order to shine amongst the innocent inhabitants of the apartments where his works are in the most vogue ; but I presume it is to prove that he can descend into the Bathos, with the same alacrity that he has formerly soared to the summit of Parnassus.

I am charmed with your description of the Lyonois. If I had been the king of France, I should certainly have imprisoned all the magistrates who were concerned in demolishing the *Lovers' Tomb* ; and they would have had reason to think themselves fortunate, if I had not carried my resentment as far as Edward intended to have done his against the burgers of Calais.

I am afraid, after what you have seen,

that you will not admire Rome. Lord Brooke * writes me word, that, either as a city, or as the object of a distant view, it by no means answered his expectation. St. Peter's church, indeed, he says, surpassed the idea he had formed of it; but the modern palaces he considers only as proofs of the magnificence, and at the same time of the poverty, of their owners. They are built to be peopled only with statues and pictures; whilst the families retire into a corner of an upper story, and eat almost as little as the breathless inhabitants that fill their galleries. The floors are of coarse brick; and, with the gardens of their villas, are kept so dirty, that, notwithstanding all the profusion of an-

* Francis lord Brooke succeeded to his father's title in the year 1727, when but eight years old. He appears to have been a ward of lord Hartford. On the earldom of Warwick, in 1759, becoming extinct, the king added the dignity of earl of Warwick to his lordship's other titles.

cient and modern ornaments, he says it is impossible to forbear considering them in the same light that we would a person dressed in a tawdry rich coat, with a dirty shirt. But why do I trouble your ladyship with his observations? You will soon be at the place, to make better for yourself; which I hope you will have the goodness to communicate to me.

I have been agreeably amused (I am afraid I still remain too ignorant to say improved) by reading signor Algarotti's *Newtonianismo per le Dame*; translated into English from the Italian, in a very good style, by a young woman not more than twenty years old*. I am well informed that she is an admirable Greek and Latin scholar; and writes both these languages, as well as French and Italian, with great elegance. But, what adds to

* Mrs. Carter, the translator of Epictetus, yet living.

the wonder she excites, is, that all this learning has not made her the less reasonable woman, the less dutiful daughter, or the less agreeable and faithful friend.

My present study is monsieur Pluche's "Histoire du Ciel," which I am very well pleased with: but I am ready to cry for the author of a little pamphlet which made me laugh heartily; and that is, the poor priest* that wrote the "Amusement Philosophique sur le Langage des Bêtes." How is it possible for the ecclesiastics to be angry with him, for a book which I dare say will not make one convert to a doctrine which he does not seem to believe himself, and which appears only to be broached *pour se divertir*, and to shew his wit? If he was in earnest, I think *les petites-maisons* would be a more proper dwelling for him than any they could banish him to.

* Bougeant.

My lord has just brought from London a poem called a Canto of Spenser; but it is written by Mr. West, a nephew of my lord Cobham. As it is one of the best imitations that I have seen for a great while, if I knew how to convey it to you I would send it along with Gustavus Vasa; which is just come out, clouded with an angry preface, a stupid prologue, and a more than nonsensical epilogue.

I am afraid you will think, dear madam, that I am taking upon me to write literary memoirs: but you must consider, that a grateful heart would make some return (though ever so poor) for the benefits it receives; and as I have no fund within myself to entertain you, I naturally endeavour to furnish myself from the stock of others.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

St. Leonard's Hill, June ^{3,}_{14,} } 1739.

I CANNOT defer any longer sending you my thanks, dear madam, for the tragedy of Mahomet, which I have received and read with great pleasure. I think the first scene, betwixt Irene and her father, very moving; and her character throughout is a perfect one: but, I must own, the catastrophe shocked me. It is so long since I read the Turkish history, that I have forgotten whether this incident is really true; but I will look in Knolles as soon as I get to Marlborough. If it was a fact, I shall be half angry with monsieur De la Noue for choosing so barbarous a prince for his hero; and, if it was not a fact, I can never forgive him for blackening his character with so inhuman an action, and

at a time too when it seemed less necessary than if it had happened before she went out to the people. One must, I am aware, make great allowances for the different ideas of virtue between Turks and Christians; but human nature, I should think, must be always so far the same as to start with horror at the thought of murdering what one loves.

I have read Mr. Thomson's *Edward and Eleonora*. I hear, it is the fashion to decry it extremely; but, I own, I am ungentle enough to prefer it infinitely to *Agamemnon*.

I conclude you have heard of miss Campbell's preferment, who is married to my lord Bruce *. She is eighteen, and he

* Miss Caroline Campbell was the only daughter of general John Campbell, of Mainmore, who was afterwards duke of Argyll. She was his lordship's third wife, and had by him a daughter, married to the present duke of Richmond. After lord Aylesbury's death, his countess re-married with the hon.

fifty-seven: however, I hear my lady Suffolk and lady Westmoreland have convinced her that she is very happy. I cannot say I wish either your daughters or my own a happiness so circumstanced. But perhaps I am mistaken in my notions of felicity: and I ought modestly to be satisfied that I am so, since I see the wise people of the world judge very differently.

The duke has been thought past all hopes of recovery from a fever that preceded his measles: and I am told, that, whilst the danger lasted, the king sat crying upon his bed the whole day; and that he came three or four times in a night to see him.

F. HARTFORD.

Henry Seymour Conway: by whom she had likewise an only daughter, married to the hon. George Damer, eldest son of lord Milton; who died without issue.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET *.

Marlborough, June 10,³
21, } 1739.

YOUR goodness in writing to me so frequently, dear madam, is a proof of your disinterested love of giving pleasure ; for, what return can I make for the most agreeable letters in the world, but a dry account of a life spent in solitude, and too uniform to afford any entertainment in the repetition ? My greatest amusements would be none to you at second-hand. The trees I planted some years ago in my garden, though they now afford me a delightful shade (under which I pass many solitary hours), have no beauties that will appear upon paper, unless a pen like that of Mr. Pope should describe them.

* In answer to her last, in p. 86.

The grotto that we have made under the mount—and which, without partiality, I think is in itself much prettier than that at Twickenham—would, in my description, fall infinitely below it, as painted in one of Mr. Pope's letters. Besides, to you, who have seen Versailles and Chantilly, what a mere scene of a raree-shew must any thing seem that can be contained in so small a spot of ground as what you know we possess here*! On the contrary, I receive a double pleasure from every beautiful country you visit: both from your accounts, which make me see them perfectly in my imagination; and from a sympathetic feeling of the satisfaction that you enjoy, while you are observing all the beauties with which art or nature can present you, in the finest part of Europe.

I am glad you had the pleasure of seeing the tomb of the celebrated Laura,

* The house is now converted into an inn.

and extremely obliged to you for sending me the epitaph that our favourite honoured her with. It proves him to have been himself a proficient in the arts that he protected, which has not been the case of all princes who have been complimented on that subject by the poets and historians who received marks of their munificence.

I hope your route will lead you to the Fontaine de Vaucluse, which Petrarch has made so famous by his sonnets, and which is also celebrated in an epistle of madame Des Houlières to mademoiselle La Charce, whose story I dare say you are not unacquainted with. Mr. Thomson told me he had seen this fountain; and he promised to give me the description of it in verse: but the promises of poets are not always to be depended upon.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Sienna, July 28, N. S., 1739.

A SILENCE of two months to you, lady Hartford, is now become so awkward, that you cannot imagine with what pain I have kept it; especially since I have past some part of my time in a manner much more worth speaking of, than any thing I met with in the other ten months of my absence. Do not, however, expect a more entertaining letter than those dull ones that you have already had the goodness to receive and pardon. I found nothing in France but what might be described a fine and well-governed country: whilst here, description must fail; being unequal

* In answer to the preceding. Lady Pomfret's last letter is dated May 28, (in page 86.)

to the noble beauty, the magnificence, the politeness, of Genoa.

Imagine me embarked *, in bad weather, on board a small tottering boat (for such is a felucca), the Mediterranean raging, and the mariners frightened out of their wits; with great difficulty getting to shore at Savona, where we stayed three days for want of a wind, with *stinking* victuals, no wine, and beds worse than none : after this, setting out in a storm, with the sea coming into the boat all the way, and arriving at last at Genoa.

The day after I landed, the principal ladies of the place did me the honour of a visit; and, I confess to you, the beauty, the address, and noble air of one of them, the wit of most, and the politeness of all, surprised and charmed me. How well I passed my time here, I leave you to imagine—when I tell you, that, not contented

* From Marseilles.

with merely visiting me, la signora Brignola devoted all her time to my amusement; taking me in the morning to the principal public buildings, and in the afternoon making assemblies (which they call *conversations*), or introducing me to those of her friends. Nothing could be more agreeable than these. All the beau-monde met together; the apartments were large, finely lighted, and furnished with all that art, or nature, could produce to please the senses. And as I did not like play, la signora Durazzi, a woman of infinite wit, and agreeable conversation, always entertained me; for it is not here as in France (that you must pay the lady of the house, or never get into it), but all are at liberty to do what they please. After a fortnight spent in this manner, lord Aubrey Beauclerk* was so obliging as to carry us in his ship to Leghorn.

* The youngest son of Charles, first duke of St. Albans. He was captain of several of his majesty's

The town of Leghorn is very pretty, but the country about it nothing extraordinary. General Wachtendonk, who commands the emperor's forces in Tuscany, is very polite to all strangers, but especially to the English. He was so in particular to us; making the troops turn out for our entertainment, and giving me letters of recommendation to the ladies of this town *, where we have taken a house.

I should have much greater pleasure in seeing you here, than at Monts; for though I cannot say the prospect is quite so rich as that, yet it is more extensive, and very fine. The house is cheerful, and large enough: it has two drawing-rooms, which I should be glad to have in a house in London, if I ever again go thither;—for which, to tell you the truth, I have no

ships; and lost his life, after a most gallant conduct, in the attack of the harbour of Carthagera, on the 24th of March, 1740-1.

* Sienna.

great inclination, if I could but withdraw some few stakes of nature and of friendship. We are encompassed with gardens, and have a very pretty one of our own. The people are vastly civil; and their manner of life is what pleases me, for I have all the day, till sun-set, to myself: I then go in my carriage to a large open piece of ground, called the Lizza; where the coaches draw up by the side of each other, and the ladies talk together (the gentlemen walking from coach to coach, as their fancy leads them) for about an hour. After this I go to the comedy, or some *conversation*, where there are always refreshments of sherbet and ice; and, about eleven o'clock, all retire to their respective homes.

I thank you for transmitting to me what the wit or dulness of our countrymen produces; and am very proud of the genius that honours our sex in the person of the young woman you mention, and, in re-

turn, will inform you of a parallel to her: this is another female, of about four-and-twenty*, of mean birth, but of such superior knowledge and capacity, that she has been elected the philosophy-professor at Bologna, where she now gives lectures as such.

H. L. POMFRET.

* Signora Bassi.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Marlborough, June 24, O. S., 1739.

DEAR MADAM,

I CANNOT determine to wait till I receive another letter from you, before I write. The distance you are at, seems to make a regular return of letter for letter impossible, without longer pauses between them than I can willingly consent to. I spend many hours alone, either in my garden or closet, every day; and reading over your letters, and thinking of you, form a great part of my entertainment: so that it is natural for me to wish to converse sometimes in reality with one that I frequently do it with in imagination; though I am withheld from doing it so often as my inclination would tempt me, by the thought, that, whatever pleasure I may give myself,

I can afford you very little from the remote part of England I am in at present from all the polite, gay, and busy world.

The talk of war, and the preparations for it, engross a great part of the public attention; but our enemy (like the king of Brentford's army in the Rehearsal) is as yet incognito.

Mr. Whitfield and his brother-methodists are likewise a subject of much conversation; and people either espouse or oppose their cause with a great degree of warmth. With some people he is considered as a saint, or an apostle; but, with others, a hypocrite, an enthusiast, a madman, or a blockhead. My lord Lonsdale and some others, who have heard him, believe him to be a man of great designs, and to have a capacity equal to any thing. For my own part, from his conduct and writings (for I never heard him preach), I take him to be a well-meaning, pious man, with great warmth and liveliness of imagi-

nation, and a much greater share of zeal than knowledge.

Poor lady Anne Frankland* is another topic of conversation; who is already parted from her husband, and, I think, without any one person giving her the least share of blame. It seems that he parted beds with her before she had been three weeks married, and on all occasions behaved towards her with the utmost cruelty. However, she made no complaint till he insisted on her leaving the house, when she begged of him not to force her to do that; and told him, that, provided he would allow her to have the sanction of being under his roof, she would submit to any thing. His answer was, that, if she continued there, he would either murder

* The daughter of Richard earl of Scarborough. She was married to Frederic Frankland, esq., member of parliament for Thirsk in Yorkshire. She died without issue, about eight months after this letter was written.

her or himself. She then applied to my lord Scarborough, who spoke to her husband with great warmth: he did not lay any fault to her charge, but only declared that she was his aversion, and persisted in the resolution of forcing her to leave him, or killing her or himself. It is said that he returns her fortune, allows her six hundred pounds a-year, and has given her a thousand pounds to buy a house. His strange conduct towards her has been so contrary to his former character, that his friends rather ascribe it to madness than his natural disposition. What flea-bites must lady Anne's court afflictions and resentments now appear to her! Nor is this the only mortification she has lately met with; for her brother John became insane a little before she was married, and still remains so.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Sienna, Aug. 19, N. S., 1739.

IT is with infinite pleasure that I receive such frequent testimonies of generosity, and constancy of a friendship which I so much wish to retain as that of you, my dear lady Hartford. But why will you treat me so like a tasteless trifler, as to make excuses because your letters are not written in the hurry of business, or the noise of town amusements? Is not one thought of your own more valuable than volumes of the designs, the contrivances, or even the exploits, of all the lovers, politicians, and heroes, that fill the scenes of private and of public life in our metropolis of London? and does not one kind expression from a friend, create more pleasing

* In answer to the last.

ideas than all the cheats that grandeur can bestow? If this is your way of thinking, allow it to be mine : but if it is not, I am sure that a correspondence with me must be a dreadful penance to you ; and which, as you can have no inducement to lay it on yourself, I can hardly believe you would undergo, if I had not, in some measure, the happiness of inspiring you with sentiments which you seem to think too elevated for my capacity. Give me leave, however, my dear madam, to tell you that you are deceived ; and that I must and will pretend to know how to value, though I can never pretend to deserve, such great possessions as those of your love and esteem.

The history of poor lady Anne Frankland is very affecting, when considered in the light in which she seems to view the affair. In another light, however, she ought surely to be very happy in being made free and rich at the same time : and, were it my case, instead of tears and lamenta-

tions, I should be tempted to smile at the thought of how much my husband had made himself the dupe of the bargain. But, seriously speaking, the poor woman has a strange fate ; and it must require a very good understanding, and a more than ordinary stock of spirits, to be serene when so surrounded by mad people.

I was yesterday at the cathedral of this place, which is one of the finest I ever saw. It is a mixture of Gothic and Roman architecture, and consists of three aisles. The middle one is formed by ten pillars of black and white marble, in alternate layers of about three inches. Towards the middle of each pillar is a statue of one of the apostles, in full proportion, in white marble. The two farthestmost of these pillars, with four others, support an hexagonal dome. These contain statues of the two other apostles, our Saviour, and the Virgin Mary, of the same size as the rest, which make the set complete.

The choir has six other pillars in the same line, but each with six layers of white marble to one of black. To each of these (in the same manner as the others) is fixed an angel, in bronze, somewhat smaller, holding a lighted taper. The altar stands alone, adorned with silver vessels, flowers, and wax candles, and having a very rich tabernacle for the host. Behind this are seats for the archbishop and the chapter, of oak finely carved. The altars down the side aisles much enrich the view. But what exceeds all the rest is the pavement; where, in different-coloured marbles, all the force and beauty of painting are expressed in several stories taken from the Bible: these are in compartments, with borders and ornaments, copied from the ancients.

As yesterday was the eve of the supposed Assumption of their Queen of Heaven, all the ladies were full dressed, as ours are on a birth-day; and the senators,

in their formalities, went to offer a candle to her. This was, I believe, six feet high, and in the form of a pillar. Towards the top was a full-length figure of the Virgin, environed with clouds and stars, having beneath her feet three shields—one containing the great-duke's arms, another the arms of the city, and the third those of the church: at the bottom, in several lesser figures, was expressed Abigail's visit to and pacification of David, all in wax of different colours. When the senators had finished their presentation, the people of every parish came in a body, preceded by drums or trumpets, each person carrying in his hand a candle for an offering. The appearance striking me in the same manner, I could not help repeating to myself the lines with which Varanes greets the Grecian* ceremonies:

* This should be *Christian*, instead of *Grecian*: and the quotation from Lee's *Theodosius* (act i., scene 2), being made from memory, is not correct.

Wond'rous the temple ! wonderful the worship !
By Oreomades, it is wond'rous all !

And so it is, that rational creatures should be so imposed upon ; and that the most pure, most simple religion, should be so polluted and deformed. But why all this is so, is not by mortals to be discovered : the ways of Providence are hidden and intricate, but, in the end, will doubtless prove both just and merciful ; and this last attribute is the best dependence of the wisest of us all.

H. L. POMFRET.

* This should be *Corinth*, instead of *Corin*.
and the quotation from Lee's *Theodosius* (act i.
scene 2), being made from memory, is not correct.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

Marlborough, Aug. 20, O. S., 1739.

I WRITE by this post to order my bookseller to send you Gustavus Vasa, Edward and Eleonora, and Mr. West's poem, which he calls a Canto of Spenser. I have ventured to add Mrs. Carter's translation of signor Algarotti's book of Light and Colours; for, though I am persuaded you can, before this time, read it in the original, I believe you will not be displeased to find we have a countrywoman capable of translating so difficult a book in a style and manner which do not in the least disgrace the work. I believe the person you speak of, who is so famous for her learning as to have been

* In answer to the letter in page 105.

admitted philosophy-professor at Bologna, is mentioned in that treatise to have been also received as a doctor of that university, in 1732: her name is Laura Maria Katherina Bassi. I am sorry I cannot make the parcel larger by putting in some other books; but there are none that I know of come out lately which are worth the carriage.

I fancy that your manner of living must be as agreeable as any that can possibly be enjoyed in a city; and I feel a partiality for the inhabitants, from their good taste in their amusements. I am glad you have found a house to your mind, with a pretty garden. The latter I think a chief ingredient towards the making any place pleasant. My lord Hartford has made an alteration in ours this summer, which I think a great addition to it. He has widened the channel of the water that surrounds it, to about thirty feet; and, at two angles, has formed cascades, which,

though they do not fall from any considerable height, have still a very good effect, both from their quickening the motion of the current, and making a rushing noise, which is heard in every part of the garden, and, in a hot day, sounds peculiarly cool and refreshing. The uppermost cascade passes betwixt two artificial rocks; which are intermixed with so much earth as to allow periwinkle and other greens that love the water, to creep upon them. The lower one, where the stream falls into the main river, has the ruins of an arch built over it; which, being composed of flints and unhewn stone, makes a very Gothic appearance. Betwixt the stones are here and there interspersed tufts of house-leek and moss; which, from their appearance, might be supposed to have grown there at least a century. Now, if you laugh at me for endeavouring to entertain you with the trifling beauties that please me, whilst you are surrounded with

all the magnificence of Italy, I shall not feel myself inclined to be at all affronted, whilst I am convinced that you would have a sincere concern for any misfortune that might befall me, and be grieved if you thought me capable of a guilty action. This is a style of thinking that the great ladies with whom you and I have been acquainted, do not always enter into ; but no matter ;—as you very justly observe, their good-natured representations cannot alter the real state of things ; and there is an intrinsic value in home-felt peace, from a sense of having acted rightly, that all the grandeur and pomp upon earth cannot boast.

I do not know whether it will be news to you that the young lady Bulkely*, after

* She was the daughter and heiress of Lewis Owen, esq., of Peniarth, in Merionethshire. In January 1731-2, she was married to Richard viscount Bulkeley. He died in March 1738-9, without issue ; and in June following she married Mr. Edward Williams, one of the land-waiters in the custom-house, at London.

being a widow about four months, has married one Williams, a tide-waiter. If she does not make a better wife to him than she did to her first husband, the poor man will not find much happiness by this advancement of his fortune ; for I heard the dowager lady say that she broke her son's heart.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Sienna, Sept. 23, N. S., 1739.

You are every day in my thoughts ; and I either want to share what I find agreeable with you, or to fly to you from what is not so. This way of thinking made you my constant companion at Genoa, though I could not find a moment to tell you so ; and la signora Durazzi (a woman that I could really have loved extremely) never said an entertaining thing, but I wished you to hear it, or myself capable of transmitting it to you. The churches too I wanted you to see ; for, in the modern way, they are extremely fine. At one of them a scene occurred that afforded me much reflexion. You indulge me in

* In answer to the last.

talking a great deal ; I will therefore venture to relate the whole story to you, though I must confess it is rather of the longest for a letter.

Amongst the maids of honour attending the electress, sister to the last grand-duke of the house of Medici, there was one named Teresa Giacomini. This lady, though not handsome, engaged the affections of a youth whose merit and quality were not equalled by his fortune ; being a younger brother, and page of honour in the same court. As the maids of honour abroad are on a different footing from ours in England, and are rather a mixture of lady of the bedchamber and bedchamber woman together, the princesses they serve live in a sort of familiarity with them. This gave the electress an opportunity of observing the inclinations of the two young persons ; and, not approving of them, she sent the young man from court. After he was gone,

though many considerable offers were made to her, the lady would never hear of matrimony; but, in opposition to all the entreaties and tears of her relations, who doated on her, she resolved to retire into a convent. Three years passed in this contest; and the electress, with whom she was a favourite, began to imagine that her wish to take the veil would wear out: this piqued her to such a degree, that, having at last obtained, or rather extorted, her mother's consent, she would not wait for a vacancy in the convents of Florence, but went to Genoa, to be professed there, and she arrived some few days before me. As she was recommended to a particular friend of la signora Brignola, my protectress, we always met at the same *conversations*; where she played at cards, and seemed as well diverted as any person present. After a week of these amusements, which is the custom before a nun takes the habit, the

day for her receiving it was fixed. All the company that she had been amongst went to see the ceremony, except my friend Durazzi; who told me, that if she was not very much mistaken in me, I had better not make one in the party: my daughters, however, wished to be present, and I attended them. She was richly dressed; much in the manner that we dress at the royal weddings, but with gold and colours: and entered the church with a cheerful and assured look, though so disordered within, as to tremble from head to foot. This she strove to hide, taking leave of every one with as much resolution and grace, as if she thought the electress was looking on; and surely she hoped it would be reported to her. When the mass was over, we all conducted her to the door of the cloister: where, turning round, she returned us thanks, and added, "*Adio, a rivederle in Paradiso;*" then, entering the door, was encompassed by

creatures all covered with black veils, each holding a lighted taper: the door then shut her in for ever. I own to you, that my resolution was much weaker than hers; and, though she was an entire stranger to me, I could not forbear shedding some tears at her unhappy, irremediable mistake — that retirement and thought would banish from her heart a passion that is often produced, and always fed, by them: indeed all the disorders of the mind are more effectually dispersed, or laid asleep, by motion and variety, than by solitude and meditation; for whenever pleasing thoughts are wanting, unpleasing ones will always introduce themselves. But to finish my story:—The order to which she belongs is so strict, that henceforth she can be seen by nobody, except three times a year: she is not permitted to eat meat, nor to wear either linen or shoes. Her new dress, meeting with a body of strength unequal to her mind, drew some

involuntary tears, when she felt the pain of the hair-cloth ; yet, far from being intimidated, she immediately turned to the company, and said that she did not doubt but in a day or two she should be sufficiently used to it, no longer to feel the pain : and that she already found herself perfectly happy in such good company ; although she did not know one of them, even by name, before she came to Genoa, nor had she so much as seen the convent before she was received into it. I cannot conclude this history, long as it is, without informing you, that the absent cause of this sacrifice was thrown into the utmost despair at hearing of it ; and he immediately resolved to follow the example, and become himself a friar.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

Marlborough, Sept. 1, O. S., 1739.

I THINK that what you say in regard to lady Anne Frankland's fate, must, upon a cool view, appear to all the world (and even to herself) to be right. But, in the first surprise of such an unexpected change, it requires more sense, and a greater calmness of temper, than the generality of people possess, to stand the contempt which the good-natured part of the world are generally inclined to bestow on persons who by any accident fall from a state in which they have seemed to enjoy a greater share of prosperity than their acquaintance are willing to think they deserve. This disposition has often amazed

* In answer to the letter in page 115.

me ; for, why the misfortunes which befall one part of the world, and may, in some shape, be the lot of all, should appear a subject of triumph to the other, I never yet could comprehend. But that it is so, experience sufficiently proves ; and nothing less than experience could convince one of it.

I am sorry that your inclination so little leads you towards England, where mine so strongly prompts me to wish you. I cannot, however, be so selfish as to desire you should leave a country where you pass your time in a manner suited to your taste, to procure myself a pleasure at the expense of even one disgustful hour to you. I have no notion of any other demonstration of love to one's friends, than that of wishing or endeavouring to contribute to their happiness ; which indeed we cannot be said to do, if we are ready, through caprice or a mistaken kind of tenderness, to sacrifice it to one's own.

I do not know whether you have heard of our new sect, who call themselves Methodists. There is one Whitfield at the head of them, a young man under five-and-twenty, who has for some months gone about preaching in the fields and market-places in the country; and in London at May-fair and Moorfields, to ten or twelve thousand people at a time. He went to Georgia with Mr. Oglethorpe, and returned to take priest's orders, which he did; and I believe, since that time hardly a day has passed that he has not preached, and generally twice. At first he and some of his brethren seemed only to aim at restoring the practice of the primitive Christians as to daily sacraments, stated fasts, frequent prayer, relieving prisoners, visiting the sick, and giving alms to the poor: but, upon some ministers refusing these men their pulpits, they have betaken themselves to preaching in the fields; and they have such crowds of fol-

lowers, that they have set all the clergy of the kingdom in a flame, who represent them as hypocrites and enthusiasts. As to the latter epithet, some passages in Mr. Whitfield's latest journals (of which he has published three or four) seem to countenance the accusation; but I think their manner of living has not afforded any grounds to suspect them of hypocrisy. The bishop of London*, however, has thought it necessary to write a pastoral letter, to warn the people of his diocese against being led away by them; though, at the same time, he treats them personally with great tenderness and moderation. I cannot say Dr. Trapp has done the same in a sermon which he has published, entitled, "The great Folly and Danger of being Righteous-overmuch;" a doctrine which does not seem absolutely necessary to be preached to the people of the present age. What appears to me most blamable in the

* Dr. Edmund Gibson.

methodists, is the uncharitable opinions they entertain in regard to the salvation of all who do not think and live after their way; but, as Providence makes all things conspire to bring about its own gracious ends, I hope the indefatigable labours of these men to make converts, will rouse our own divines to a more careful attendance on the duties of their function. I have heard one particular since I began my letter, from the recorder of Bristol, a very sensible man: he says that Mr. Whitfield has been much among the colliers in that neighbourhood; and has collected so much money from them as to erect a building (which is not finished) large enough to contain near five thousand people. It is to serve them both as a church and a school-house. He says also that they are so much reformed in their manners, that one may pass a whole day among them without hearing an oath.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD *.

Sienna, Oct. 9, N. S., 1739.

I AM very much entertained, dear madam, by your account of the methodists: they were but just beginning to be talked of when I left London, but I find they are much increased in a short time. Whilst they start no new opinions, I cannot but wish (though I dare not hope) that their doctrine may prevail: for it is undeniable that the practice of the best Christians differs widely from that of the primitive ones, in exteriors at least; and where these are entirely wanting, I fear there is small guard to defend the mind from the dangerous attractions of vice. As you have already said in one of your letters to me, so I may

* In answer to the last.

now say of myself, that I fancy you will think I am writing a sermon; though with this difference — that yours is extremely agreeable, and mine excessively dull. Do not, however, wonder at it; for the inhabitants of Sienna are not quite so ingenious as they were in the days of Boccace, and consequently I can extract nothing from them worth putting into a letter. Were I, however, so happy as to converse in another way with you, it is possible that I might make you laugh at some similitudes which I have met with here, to things that formerly had quite a different effect on me: but experience makes fools wise; and I now plainly see, that none but fools are anxious for what they have nothing to do with.

The death of the pope, which is expected every moment, draws all our countrymen to Rome, in hopes of seeing a conclave; so that, at present, we are the only English here: and, this being the season when the

Italians retire into the country, in a few days we shall have the city to ourselves, for we have no thoughts of removing till after Christmas.

As to politics,—though I hear a great deal, I shall trouble you with none ; since there is little dependence on their truth, and much less entertainment from them (though ever so true) than any other subject.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

St. Leonard's Hill, Sept. 20, O. S., 1739.

THE weather has confined me a good deal to my bow-window, since I came hither: but our environs have not yet lost their beauty; and though they have laid aside the gay colours which adorned them in the spring, they retain great charms for me in the sober array of the present season: which perhaps is agreeable, from its being more nearly allied to my own time of life; and which seems, in all the progress of its decline, to represent what I feel within myself.

I have seen both lord and lady Harry Beauclerk *, since I came here. They

* Lord Henry Beauclerk was the fourth son of Charles, the first duke of St. Albans. He was born in August, 1701. At the siege of Gibraltar, in 1727,

appear very happy; and I hope, for both their sakes, that they will continue to be satisfied with the very moderate share of fortune they have chosen by this alliance. For people of their rank, this will require some prudence, as well as a great deal of passion; for, to live in a cottage on love; has a much better effect in a stanza of a ballad, than in real life. I should have fancied, from her experience of the inconvenience of quality without a necessary affluence to support it, that she would have been of my opinion; but this is one among thousands of instances, how little one is capable of judging for other people.

Speaking of narrow fortunes, puts me in mind of an anecdote relating to the duke of Montagu; which I cannot forbear telling,

he is said to have greatly distinguished himself as a volunteer, under the earl of Portmore. In December, 1738, he married Mary, the sister of Nevil lord Lovelace, the lady above alluded to; by whom he had seven children.

though it is yet kept a secret. It has been thought necessary to make such an addition to the number of gentlemen-pensioners (*mais en cachette*, and upon half-pay), as hath put twenty thousand pounds into his pocket. How well our governors follow that precept in the scripture! “to those that have much, more shall be given:” and I wish they may not go on with the next line of the passage; for our pensions come with leaden feet, and make long stops by the way.

The French ambassador asked an audience of the king some days since, in which he told him that he had orders to offer the ninety-five thousand pounds demanded by our merchants. His majesty said, he was obliged to the king of France for his good intention, but it was now too late. The ambassador answered, that then his master hoped his majesty would not be surprised if he sent a fleet to convoy the flotilla; to which the king replied, that

if the king of France thought it necessary to send any fleet, he would advise him to send a strong one.

I have been very agreeably entertained this week, with reading “*Les Poësies de Monsieur l'Abbé Regnier Desmarais*,” which, though an old book, was new to me. If I did not think you had read it, I would copy some pieces out of it, for your amusement; but as I conclude you have read every thing in it that is worth reading, I will not tire you with transcribing what you know already.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Sienna, Nov. 6, N. S., 1739.

How charming is kindness from those we love—and love for such qualities as lady Hartford possesses! You have not only the goodness to think of me at this terrible distance (for I confess I feel it so every day more and more), but you have the charity too, to let me know, how happy my idea is, in attending you in your state at Marlborough, your retreat at Windsor, and your masquerade in London; for there (at least, at one place there) some sort of mask is absolutely necessary for every one. Those who, like you, have no faults to hide, must hide their virtues; that they may pursue their own way in peace,

* This also seems in answer to the letter in p. 111.

and, after a gay spring, enjoy the serenity of that autumn which you say best pleases you. Indeed it is the time of fruits and harvest: May delights the eye, but August brings us nourishment; youth pursues happiness, but it is our riper age that enjoys it. When truth, by experience, has unveiled the mysteries that ignorance and passion made, then all our little piques and emulations are no more: we see virtue, and we love it; we are enabled by observation to make reflexions, and from reflexion know the value of a faithful friend. Such you are, and such I hope always to appear to you.

Sienna is become a desert—cold to extremity; and no amusements are left. Towards the end of this month I think, they say, the company return: but they are so ridiculously formal in their dress (for which neither age nor infirmities can find any indulgence), that it will be impossible to converse with them in the depth of winter; so,

as at Monts, I shall once more imitate the tortoise, and wait in my house the return of spring.

The equilibrium in which peace and war seem to hang all over Europe, produces every day fresh and various reports. But whilst the greater powers remain thus doubtful, the little state of St. Marino has determined to resign its long-loved title of "Mother of Republics," and surrender itself to the pope. He is one small hill the richer by this mighty acquisition; which cardinal Alberoni, riding on a mule, went in procession from Ravenna, at the head of three hundred men, to take possession of, in the name of his holiness*.

Your observations on the poor lovers and the rich duke are perfectly just; but

* There is an interesting account of the failure of this plot of the crafty cardinal's, in vol. ii. of "Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons," by the late Mr. Seward, page 246.

far be the omen from the subsequent part of the text !—I fancy by this time you are preparing for the birth-day. An account of this I know you will be so obliging as to send me; though that of your own arrival safe in Grosvenor-street, will give much more pleasure to her who is, with true affection and respect, &c. &c.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

Windsor Forest, Oct. 7, N. S., 1739.

How shall I describe to you, my dear lady Pomfret, the sentiments that arise in my heart at the reading your letters? I feel a mixture of esteem, affection, admiration, and sorrow, to think how many years passed by in which I might possibly have enjoyed the happiness of your conversation, or even been admitted to your friendship, had I sought it with that care and assiduity which I am now truly sensible it deserves. How blind was I to my own interest, and to a merit which I scarcely had leisure (after it had waked me from my lethargy) to be acquainted with, till, as a just punishment for my former want of discern-

* In answer to the letter in page 126.

ment, I was doomed to live banished from it ! But the generosity of your disposition inclines you to alleviate a chastisement which I too well deserved, by allowing me a place in your memory though I am exiled from your sight, and permitting me to hope for a share in your heart, which (if I know my own) I would not part with for all the wealth and splendor of the east.

I do not wonder that you shed tears at the profession of the unhappy votress at Genoa, since I could scarcely restrain mine at the recital of her sufferings. I am afraid solitude is not a cure for love; but I think the inclination to it a very natural effect of that passion, when it is unsuccessful : it leaves the mind in a state of languor and melancholy that makes it shun society, and retire from mankind, to indulge the idea of what it ought most carefully to avoid, and which probably it would endeavour to free itself from, were it not generally attended with a depression

of spirits, that is to the mind what fetters are to the body, and prevents it from using sufficient motion to put itself in a more easy situation.

In return for your story of the nun, I will relate to you one which I had within these few days from a friend of mine, a woman of great veracity and good sense: she assured me of the truth of it, from her own knowledge.

A gentleman in Suffolk had an estate of two thousand pounds a-year; and an only son, who was brought up with the expectation of being heir to that fortune after his father's death. This took place when he was just four-and-twenty: but, when he came to look into his inheritance, he found the whole property so involved, that he had only left four hundred pounds a-year, which proved to be in church lands. He lived on this for about twelve months, but during that time was very melancholy. He then declared to his friends, that it was

against his conscience to enjoy the revenue of what had belonged to the church, and that he could make himself easy in no other way but by restoring the lands; which he did, in spite of the persuasion of all his relations to the contrary, and left himself with no more than an annuity of fifty pounds. In the neighbourhood there was a quaker, who always went once, and sometimes twice, a-year into Yorkshire, on business. At one house in that county he was received upon a footing of great intimacy; by an old gentleman, who had an only daughter, that was to be his heiress—elegant in her person, of good temper, and well accomplished. The quaker one day asked him why he did not get this young lady married. The gentleman replied, that it was what he wished to do, but he was determined never to dispose of her but to a man whose principles he approved, and who would come and settle upon the estate. If he could find such a person, he would

give his daughter to him, though he was not worth a shilling. The quaker related to him the history of his neighbour: and the old gentleman was so much delighted with his character, that he desired the quaker to bring him to his house the next time he came; and, if the young people liked each other, it should be a match. The honest quaker returned home, and with great pleasure told the young gentleman the prospect of this good fortune; but was surprised to find all the arguments he could use wanted force to prevail on him to go. He declared that he would rather live upon his small annuity all his days, than marry a woman he did not previously love, though she possessed the wealth of the Indies. When the time drew near for the quaker to go again into Yorkshire, he applied to a relation of the young gentleman with whom he lived, and shewed him several letters from the lady's father, requesting him to bring his friend along with him. By the

importunity of this relation, and the quaker's entreaty, the youth was at length prevailed on to accompany him; but under a feigned name, and only as an acquaintance whom he had met by accident on the road. Matters being thus settled, he set out with the quaker, and was introduced to the old gentleman and his daughter. They were all three so well pleased with each other, that they soon became better acquainted, and the young gentleman discovered who he was. The marriage was quickly concluded; and he now enjoys eighteen hundred pounds a-year, which his wife brought him, besides a considerable sum of money. They have now lived together six years in perfect happiness, and have two children.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD*.

Sienna, November 20, N. S., 1739.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE just received so charming a letter from you, that, though the post does not go from hence for two days, I cannot forbear sitting down this minute to begin an answer. But why do I talk of an answer? Such tender and noble sentiments as yours, in a grateful heart (as I hope mine is), make far deeper impressions than can be described on paper; and therefore I must refer you to the sympathy that there is in the souls of friends, to learn what passes in mine on this occasion. An inclination born in parting, and perfected in absence, is of too generous a nature not to

* In answer to the last.

expect for it the success at last of spending our time together : and, though two years and a half sounds (nay, is) a long while, yet

Hope with a goodly prospect feeds the eye :
Shews, from a rising ground, possession nigh ;
Shortens the distance ; or o'erlooks it quite,—
So easy 'tis to travel with the sight.

In the mean time let us continue this pleasing commerce of letters ; and fancy we are talking to each other till we do it in good earnest. I must confess that I grieve, with you, the time we lost ; and often reflect how great a happiness it would have been, in our late situation, to have known each other as well then as we do now : but it was not so ordained. All have their lot ; and we must make the best of ours. Like actors in a play, in one scene we are to be pleased, in another angry : now struggling under misrepresentation and deceit ; then made happy in the en-

joyments of this world, or quiet in the grave, where we no more desire them. And all this appears to me very consistent with free will: for each performer may play his part well or ill; and the beggar that has gained applause, has more right to be rewarded than the hero that was hissed—though neither one nor the other chose his part at first, any more than we could choose whose children we would be.

The story you sent me is a charming one; and, I think, a proof of what I have been saying. I wish I could give your ladyship any return in this for the entertainment it gave me; for, besides that all you say is said in the most agreeable manner, the reward of merit, whenever it happens in this life, is as a friendly star to travellers in a dark night,—it encourages us to pursue our way.

I suppose, before this can reach London, it will be no news that admiral Haddock has taken two very rich ships. It

is certain that the Spaniards themselves are convinced that the English will be their superiors in a war : but their queen is Italian, and consults only the interest of those schemes which she is forming to make her children reign here, where their gold makes them much more desired by the hungry Italians than the poor Germans are ; and it is generally thought that the latter will not long continue amongst us.—But what am I doing?—talking politics as fast as if I was solicitous about them ; whilst, indeed, I am not the least so ; bounding my desires in a very narrow compass, though a very rich possession—the care and welfare of my family, and the esteem of my friends. Adieu, dear madam ! What I have said needs not the explanation of adding that I am

Yours,

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET *.

Oct. 24, O. S., } 1739.
 Nov. 4, N. S., }

I AM very happy in finding either my letters or friendship agreeable to you, my dear lady Pomfret; for I own to you it would be painful to me to deny myself the pleasure of writing the one, and impossible for me to withdraw the other. I have a certain diffidence of my own judgment, which makes me slow in the choice of a friend; but, when that choice is made, my attachments are too strong to be easily broken through. This consideration, with a just sense how little merit I have to engage those whom I wish the most to please, has made me contract few friendships; and, except your ladyship, I cannot

* In answer to the letter in page 137.

say there are above three people (out of my own house) with whom I converse with any degree of freedom, or from whom I can hope for any instances of real kindness. My lord Bolingbroke says, in a letter to Dr. Swift, that with some sort of people one must be always in the attitude of one of the wooden figures before a sword-cutler's shop in Germany. It is a melancholy reflexion, that it should be necessary to pass the greatest part of our life in so constrained a posture; but, I doubt, your experience, as well as my own, has proved that it is so.

I shall not leave this place till the meeting of the parliament. My daughter is still in Yorkshire; and she and I have attended all birth-days so many years, that I hope we may be excused this.

Have you no curiosity to see a conclave, that you are to remain at Sienna whilst all your country-folk are hurrying

to Rome? As to me, who travel only on the wings of imagination, I feel more inclined to go to Ispahan, and see Kouli Khan make his triumphant entry there; which, our newspapers tell us, is to be attended by *seven thousand elephants*. There is something so stupendous in these eastern pomps, that all European magnificence fades before them; and two or three battalions of horse and foot soldiers make a very inconsiderable appearance, when one has been reading the accounts of an oriental cavalcade.—I hope none of the crowd which were drawn together yesterday to see the ceremony of proclaiming war with Spain, have lately studied the annals of Persia; lest it should sink the dignity of the procession almost to the level with a puppet-shew, with

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD *.

Sienna, Dec. 4, N. S., 1739.

IT is, as you say, dear madam, a melancholy reflexion, that one must always be upon the guard against our fellow-creatures : and being sent (as it seems) on an involuntary errand into this world, that we should, amongst people in the same distress, meet with continual hostilities—and I would to God I could say only hostilities ; for, alas ! they frequently add treacheries too. I confess, the great desire I was born with to an innocent pleasing society, has often betrayed me to grasp the shadow for the substance. I think, what Mr. Dryden makes Almanzor

* In answer to the last.

say of lovers, may not be improperly applied to friends :

Ye gods! why were not hearts first pair'd above?
 But some still interfere with others' love.
 Ere each for each, by certain mark, are known,
 You mould 'em up in haste, and cast 'em down;
 And, whilst we seek what carelessly you sort,
 Ye sit in state, and make our pains your sport.

Friendship I take to be the noblest sentiment of the soul: and all that is good and great in love, is a part of that; since the first is a virtue in nature, and the other only by accident. Thus all the just reflexions, tender thoughts, and strugglings of reason to overcome inclination, are much properer to an affection that does not seek an end, than one that does; and surely all the train of hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, that it is not in the power of another to give one, are placed in our constitution, by a wise and good Being, rather to form alliances for the

comfort and support of our minds, than with any view to sensual gratifications. The enclosed verses, if you can only suppose wit and merit in the place of beauty, will suit murdered friendship as well as love, to which they are applied. They are translated from the Italian* by Mr. Horton, chaplain to the English factory at Leghorn.

GRAZIE AGLI INGANNI TUOI,

IMITATED.

I.

THANKS to thy little female arts,
 At length my freedom I can boast ;
 And number mine among those hearts
 Whom beauty gain'd, and falsehood lost.
 The pitying gods, that eas'd my pain,
 Now shew thee fickle, insincere ;
 And aid me to shake off the chain
 I once was fondly charm'd to wear.

* Of Metastasio.

II.

My breast, disturb'd with no desire,
 Is now grown settled and serene :
 No love conceal'd, like smother'd fire,
 Struggles for vent, by force kept in.
 My colour now nor comes nor goes,
 Whoe'er thy once-lov'd name repeats :
 Dost thou thy wonted charms disclose ?
 My heart the self-same motion beats.

III.

Thoughtless of thee I take my rest,
 Thy image never forms my dream ;
 Nor, waking, are they more address'd
 To thee, till now their earliest theme.
 When choice or business calls me hence,
 No more of absence I complain ;
 Present, the same indifference
 Affects with neither joy nor pain.

IV.

With calmness I can own thee fair,
 Nor wish thy beauties to possess ;
 Can know thee false, without despair ;
 Can laugh at all my past distress.
 I meet thee in my careless walk
 Unmov'd, nor care one single jot ;
 Can unconcern'd of Kitty talk
 With those that have or have her not.

V.

Whatever face she please to wear,
 Be it of fondness or disdain,
 It gives me neither hope nor fear :
 She plays the studied part in vain.
 No more thy perjur'd lips can move
 The deep recesses of my soul ;
 Those eyes, whose beams once darted love,
 With artful glances vainly roll.

VI.

Am I displeas'd, or am I gay,
 The praise or blame are wholly mine ;
 My humour now no more gives way
 To every little change of thine.
 Without thee I can taste the joys
 Of woods, of mountains, or of fields ;
 And with thee, when the country cloy,
 Equal disgust the country yields.

VII.

And yet, with justice, I can own
 I thought, and still I think, thee fair ;
 Though I deny thou shin'st alone,
 Nor think thy charms beyond compare.
 Take not the friendly truth unkind,
 If now the more discerning eye
 At length some imperfections find
 Where love could only beauties spy.

VIII.

Nay, when I tore thee from my heart,
 So deeply wert thou rooted there,
 Such was the struggle, such the smart,
 It seem'd my very self to tear!
 But now at last my suff'rings cease;
 With grateful lips I bless my cure:
 Who would not, for a life of ease,
 Minutes, or hours, of pain endure?

IX.

Such pleasure did the linnet find,
 Whom late the treacherous snare had caught:
 It 'scap'd, and left its plumes behind,
 Nor counted freedom dearly bought.
 Those plumes shall some few days restore:
 Danger has taught thee to take heed;
 And never shall the lime-twigg more
 For thee successfully be spread.

X.

I know, good Kitty, you suggest
 My passion unextinguish'd burns,
 And think the fever in my breast
 Will have again its hot returns.
 If now I seem too long to dwell
 On suff'rings I have undergone,
 Think how delightful 'tis to tell,
 When safe, the risks a man has run.

XI.

Thus the old soldier, now disarm'd,
 Repeats the tale of finish'd wars ;
 And, with the glad remembrance charm'd,
 Numbers his wounds and shews his scars.
 From years of servitude redeem'd,
 Thus the poor captive boasts his chain ;
 As if his glory he esteem'd
 What heretofore he dragg'd with pain.

XII.

Whate'er I say, I only seek
 The posture of my mind to shew ;
 And care not this—if, when I speak,
 Kitty believes me, yes or no.
 'Tis all the same, at what I say
 If Kitty please to smile or fret ;
 With equal freedom Kitty may
 Slight her old lover, or regret.

XIII.

Thou'rt false ; and gladly I resign
 All int'rest in thy roving mind :
 For thee, a second heart like mine,
 Tender and true, thou'lt never find.
 From shipwreck just escap'd, would I
 Rashly put out again to sea,
 Thy sex can easily supply
 Numberless coquets for me.

But, that we may not leave this subject on the despairing side, I will, as the French say, turn the medal, and from my favourite Genoa give you one true story more.

La signora Brignola—whose wit, beauty, and politeness, have few equals, and perhaps no superior—in her extreme youth contracted a friendship with another young lady, called Norina, since married to one of the Doria family. These two friends lived in the greatest affection and the most agreeable manner imaginable; enjoying all the plenty that fortune could give, and all the esteem that merit such as theirs could inspire; when (on what accident I know not) they became enemies. And as their love had been, so their enmity now became, violent: they not only refused to see each other, but they admitted none to their *conversations* that spoke to the other. All the town had an uncommon regard for them, and these soon became divided like themselves. They even carried mat-

ters to such an extreme, that those of Brignola's party wore a green ribbon, and those of Doria's a blue one. Thus these heroines for some time maintained a most splendid war against each other. At length Brignola was seized with a violent fever: her thoughts then ran entirely on her friend Doria; she longed to see her, to forgive, and be forgiven; but was too proud to send to one who could see her die without regret. In the mean time Doria, on hearing of Brignola's illness, was in equal distress: all her anger was extinguished in the other's danger, and nothing prevented her from flying to her friend, but the fear of not being received. Unable, however, to endure the thought of parting as enemies, she sent a private message to her, which the other received with transport. They agreed that their first meeting should be secret, out of respect to their allies, and from the rising shame they each began to feel for their ill-judged

quarrel. This treaty soon concluded in a peace. La Brignola recovered; and they have ever since been such good friends, that when I was at Genoa, under the protection of la signora Brignola (who related this story herself), I went to several assemblies at la signora Doria's palace.

I fear you will dread commending my *historiettes*, since you see it draws such a number of them upon you. But, to shew you that there is a possibility of amendment, upon the least reproof I will discontinue them.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

London, Nov. $\left. \begin{array}{l} 15. \\ 26. \end{array} \right\}$

YOUR kind letter, my dear lady Pomfret, found me, to my great regret, in Grosvenor-street, where I arrived two nights ago. I staid in Windsor Forest till the thirteenth of November; and left it more unwillingly than usual, from the circumstance of our returning thither no more. The house, I own, was a very bad one; but there was something in the retiredness of its situation, and the beautiful prospect from it, that I would not (to please myself) have exchanged for the finest apartment in Versailles or Hampton Court. But it is so much out of repair, that we could not live there any longer without buying and

* Perhaps in answer to the letter in page 144.

(in a manner) re-building it; which, for a very substantial reason that you may guess, was impracticable. We have now taken a house just by Colnbrook *. It belongs to my lord Bathurst; and is what Mr. Pope, in his letters, calls his *extravagante bergerie*. The environs perfectly answer that title; and come nearer to my idea of a scene in Arcadia, than any place I ever saw. The house is old, but convenient; and when you are got within the little paddock it stands in, you would believe yourself an hundred miles from London, which I think a great addition to its beauty.

I begin to fear that I am a better prophet than I knew of, and shall soon imagine myself as deeply read in futurity as the witch who hailed Macbeth "thane of

* This was Richking's (or Ricking's) Park, on the right of the Bath road, about seventeen miles from London; now the residence of John Sullivan, esq.

Cawdor ;" for, though the text I quoted is not yet fulfilled in all the extent I spoke of, yet the salaries have changed their names to pensions, and by that lucky metamorphosis are (as I suppose you have found) made subject to the land-tax, which cuts off near forty pounds a-year.

E. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Florence, Jan. 3, N. S., 1740.

YOU, my dear lady Hartford, will be surprised to find me in this city; where I came with as much pleasure as you express regret at seeing London. Sienna was dull, dear, and void of all conveniences. Here we have *conversations*, amusements of many kinds, and great plenty, without much expense. Since this is the case, you will wonder we did not first come here; and so do I: but my lord Pomfret, who had seen both places twenty years ago, was diffident of his own judgement; and I, who had seen neither, could not pretend to form one; whilst the inhabitants of Leghorn, from some private piques of their own, railed so abominably at the Florentines, and cried up the Siennese to

such a degree, that we were persuaded to take the worse, instead of the better. We have, however, learned, for the future, to believe nothing but what we see—a rule indeed that I have adopted in many respects for some years past. We arrived here on the twentieth of last month; an apartment having been provided for us by Mr. Mann*, the king's minister here, who is very obliging, and at all times ready to serve his country-people. Mr. Horace Walpole†, lord Hartington, Mr. Naylor (the bishop of Chichester's son), with Mr. Frankland and his nephew Mr. Worsly, came to us the next day: they are all very civil, and most of them very agreeable. Besides these English, lady Walpole is settled here, who is very well-bred and entertaining. She has shewn me great civilities; as hath also a Florentine lady, who has

* Afterwards sir Horace Mann.

† Afterwards earl of Orford.

taken me under her protection, and conducted me to my audience of the dowager electress palatine*, the only survivor of the house of Medici, being sister to the late grand-duke. She is above seventy, and enjoys her health and senses perfectly. The people here esteem her proud and forbidding, and very tenacious of forms; but to me she was easy and entertaining. She kept me (as I was told) ten times longer than her usual audiences. She talked over my own family, and that of our court, one by one; and said that her elector was the person employed to make the match between the present emperor (when king of Spain) and our late mistress, with whom she was personally acquainted before married to the king. When I

* Maria-Anna Louisa, daughter of Cosmo III.; and widow of John-William elector palatine, who died in 1716. She survived till October, 1743. There are some curious particulars concerning her, in Noble's *Memoirs of the House of Medici*.

departed, her lord-chamberlain followed me a room further than usual; and she has since done me the honour to say to others, that my behaviour had given her no ill opinion of the English court.

As to the curiosities in this place (which are numerous), I have yet seen so few, and those so confusedly, that I cannot pretend to give any account of them.

H. L. POMFRET.

P. S.—I had forgotten to tell you, that, whilst the electress's lady and maids of honour entertained me in her anti-chamber, I took the opportunity to mention to them that I had seen signora Teresa Giacomini take the veil at Genoa; and I spoke in high terms of her greatness of mind on the occasion.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Dec. ^{13,}_{24,} } 1739.

I AM so glad of any opportunity to write to you, dear madam, that I cannot help laying hold of every one that offers itself: and having had the enclosed ode sent me, I fancied it might give you as much pleasure as it has done me; and half the satisfaction would be lost if you were not to share in it. The author is the same Mrs. Carter who translated signor Algarotti's book. I confess, this last performance raises my idea of her merit; since I think it shews a good heart, as well as a clear head. I shall be happy if you agree in this judgement. A pretty pastoral, or a love-sonnet, is generally the highest attainment of a muse of two-and-twenty; but she seems to carry her thoughts to more

substantial improvements, and has united two faculties that are not always found together—wit, and solid reason.

ODE TO MELANCHOLY.

A Thought in a Church-yard.

HAIL, Melancholy ; gloomy power,
Companion of my lonely hour,
To sober thought confin'd !

Thou sweetly-sad ideal guest,
In all thy soothing charms confest,
Indulge my pensive mind.

No longer wildly hurried through
The tides of mirth, that ebb and flow
In folly's noisy stream ;

I from the busy crowd retire,
To court the objects that inspire
Thy philosophic dream.

Through yon dark grove of mournful yews,
With solitary steps I muse,
By thy direction led ;

Here, cold to Pleasure's airy forms,
Consociate with my sister-worms,
And mingle with the dead.

Hail, midnight horrors, awful gloom,
 Ye silent regions of the tomb,
 My future peaceful bed !
 Here shall my weary eyes be clos'd.
 And all my sorrows lie repos'd,
 In Death's eternal shade.
 Ye pale inhabitants of night,
 Before my intellectual sight
 In solemn pomp ascend !
 Oh, tell how trifling now appears
 The train of idle hopes and fears
 That human life attend !
 Ye faithless idols of our sense,
 Here own how vain your fond pretence,
 Ye empty names of joy !
 Your transient forms like shadows pass,
 Frail offspring of the magic glass,
 Before the mental eye.
 The dazzling colours, falsely bright,
 Attract the gazing vulgar sight
 With superficial state.
 Through Reason's clearer optics view'd,
 How stript of all its glare, how rude,
 Appears the painted cheat !
 Can wild Ambition's tyrant pow'r,
 Or ill-got Wealth's unbounded store,
 The dread of death controul ?

Can Pleasure's more bewitching charms

Avert or sooth the dire alarms

That shake the parting soul ?

Religion ! ere the hand of Fate

Shall make reflexion come too late,

My erring senses teach,

Amidst the flatt'ring hopes of youth,

To meditate the solemn truth

These awful relics preach..

Thy penetrating beams disperse

The mist of errors, whence our fears

Derive their fatal spring ;

'Tis thine the trembling heart to warm,

And soften to an angel's form

The pale terrific king..

Sublim'd by thee, the soul aspires

Beyond these trifling low desires,

In nobler views elate ;

Unmov'd her future change surveys,

And with intrepid courage pays

The universal debt.

In Earth's soft bosom sooth'd to rest,

She smiles, by smiling dreams caress'd

That gently whisper peace ;

'Till the last morn's fair op'ning ray

Unfolds the bright eternal day

Of active life and bliss.

I was at court, to carry my daughter there, on Monday; and saw all that part of the royal family in good health and spirits; except the princess Caroline, who is again taking Ward's pills. We talk a great deal of the princess Mary's wedding; but I think it is still uncertain whether the prince of Hesse is to come over, or whether the duke is to marry her by proxy.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD *.

Florence, Feb. 7, N. S., 1740.

YOUR last letter freed me from the uneasiness I was under for the health of yourself and family; and brought me a very sublime and agreeable entertainment in Mrs. Carter's ode, which in a few days was followed by a packet from Leghorn, with the other books you were so obliging as to send me. Though almost under a vow to read nothing but Italian till I perfectly understand it, yet I could not forbear breaking through my restraint in regard to the poetry. Spenser's Canto charms though it condemns me. Edward and Eleonora tires and provokes me: the first, by its stupidity; the last, that a man who

* In answer to the last.

is incapable of feeling should choose such a subject to destroy. Gustavus Vasa has greatly my approbation, and I think the prohibition of it a more severe libel than any I have read. It is a thousand pities that such a genius should be lost ; and if the stage cannot profit by him, I wish he would turn his thoughts on an epic poem in honour of his country. Amongst many fine subjects, I will name one to you that I think has never been touched on ; and indeed, from party writers (in which England at all times abounded), the hero is generally placed in such a light, that his virtues are clouded. The person to whom I allude, is John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster ; whose true picture is only to be found by reading Froissart, an historian universally allowed and esteemed, who was himself personally acquainted with that prince. To John of Gaunt we are in some measure indebted for the Reformation ; since he was the protector of Wickliff,—the first who

appeared an enemy to the errors which had crept into the Christian religion, without starting any notions that were likely to prove destructive to it. This, however, is not the part of his life that I would make the scene of the poem. I should take his conquest and settlement of Spain; which country, with the valour and success of Alexander, he was the first that reduced. He then, with the wisdom and policy of Cæsar, settled the state; marrying his daughter (who was the true heir) to the son of the king in possession. This would give room for a very beautiful episode. Could you engage him in such an enterprise, your merit to your country would exceed that of Ulysses to Greece when he brought Achilles to the Grecian camp; for no arms shine half so bright as the ink of a good pen, nor (consequently) reflect half the glory to succeeding ages.

I have found here a very scarce and valuable book, of which there is but one

copy to be sold in Florence. The price, however, is too great for me to give; and if it is not lowered very much, I must content myself with a cursory view of it for a few days only, in which the owner has left it me to consider of. This work is the novels of Bandello; who lived in the time of Leo the Tenth, when polite literature flourished most in Italy. He has dedicated each novel to some great person; and both the dedications and the stories are far superior to any thing I have ever met with of that sort.

I am disappointed of some painted earthenware, that I intended to have sent you. The only man who manufactured it well having quarrelled with the person who baked it, he has sent me word that he cannot perform his bargain; and indeed, though it is the prettiest kind of thing to be had at Sienna, it is far inferior to what I find here. I can supply you from hence with alabaster vases, small brass statues, or

marble and paste tables extremely fine and beautiful. If you choose one of the latter, and would have your arms on it, be so good as to get them painted on a piece of paper, and enclose them in your next letter, mentioning at the same time the size you would have the table ; for I must have a representative in your grotto, where, retired from better company, I would sometimes steal on your remembrance. In mine you never want a place, though I am oftener now in crowds than ever ; for Florence abounds in diversions during the carnival, and my daughters are very desirous to partake of them.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Feb. 4, O. S., 1740.

THE news will, before this time, have informed you of my lord Scarborough's* death; but perhaps the tragical manner of it may yet be unknown to you. On the 30th of January he sent for my lord Delaware; to whom he talked more than two hours, about a bill to be brought into the house of lords, to enable my lord Halifax to pay his sisters' fortunes. After which he sent to know whether my lord Essex dined at home; and upon hearing that he did not, he ordered a dinner in his own house, and appointed to meet my

* Richard Lumley succeeded his father in the earldom of Scarborough, in the year 1721. He was lord-lieutenant of the county of Northumberland, knight of the garter, &c.

lord and lady Harvey, and lady Anne Frankland, at the duchess of Manchester's, to play at cards, at seven o'clock, at which time he ordered his chariot: but when his valet-de-chambre went up to let him know that it was come, he found him dead on the floor, with a pistol lying by him, which he had discharged in at his mouth. The balls were lodged in his brain, and had not penetrated his skull. Every thing was agreed on for his marriage, which was to have taken place very soon. It is said, that the duchess of Manchester's affliction, and that of lady Anne Frankland, are inexpressible*.

The French ambassador died on Friday last, and madame De Cambis set out this morning on her return to France. She

* There is a portrait of lord Scarborough, with a particular account of this unfortunate affair, in the first volume of Maty's Miscellaneous Works of Lord Chesterfield, who was likely to be best informed of all the circumstances attending it.

had the good fortune, a few weeks ago, to reclaim a child, who had been stolen at Paris from a *president de parlement* who is vastly rich. The parents sent over a description of the child, about two months before; and one day, as madame De Cambis's woman was crossing the hall of their house, she saw a beggar-woman at the door, with so pretty a child, that she would carry it up to the ambassadress. Madame De Cambis, the moment she saw it, recollected the description; and, though it was all in rags, remarked that it had on its head a black velvet embroidered cap, which she knew to be French work. On examining the child more closely, she found some mark that was inserted in the description. She then asked it (for it was between three and four years old) if the beggar-woman was its mother. The child answered "Yes," but said that it had another mamma once. On this she retained the child, and sent an account of

it to its parents; who immediately dispatched to England a person who knew it, and who found it to be the same they had lost.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

Feb. 20, 1740.

I HAVE received your letter of February 7th, N.S. ; but as unmixed pleasure is not the lot of mortals, I had the mortification to find by it, that one of yours, and several of mine, had miscarried. This circumstance must make me appear both negligent and ungrateful. In order therefore to justify both my head and my heart, I must set you down the dates of several of my letters to which I have received no answers ; for your ladyship's of the 4th of December never reached me. I wrote from St. Leonard's Hill, October the 24th ; and from London, November the 14th, December the 6th, and once more since I received yours of January the 3d ; besides the letter in which Mrs. Carter's ode was

* In answer to the letter in page 183.

enclosed. Judge then if I may not appropriate the duke of Marlborough's motto: "*Faithful, though unfortunate.*" Yes, my dear lady Pomfret, I am too happy in your correspondence to neglect it: and, honestly speaking, have several times forbore writing, when my inclination has strongly prompted me to it, for fear of being importunate; for though I have few pleasures equal to that of hearing from you, I should think it unreasonable to take up your time from more entertaining amusements.

You will be surprised to hear that I have sympathised in your studies, and have also been reading Bandello's novels; of which a new edition (and I believe a very correct one) is coming out in England, by Harding in St. Martin's Lane. This work was so scarce, that there were only two old copies, one of which is in the possession of my lord Foley. Last winter I tried to prevail with him to lend

it Harding to be reprinted; but he was angry with him about something else, and quite inexorable: however, the other copy has been procured, and it will be published as soon as Harding can get such a number of people to promise to take copies as will defray his expense; and he prints no more than for the subscribers. In the mean time he has very politely sent me his proof book, of which both the type and paper are good. If you do not agree for the copy you have seen, I will bespeak you one of these when I receive your commands.

I want also to know whether you have heard of a proposal for printing by subscription the papers of Thurloe, who was secretary to Oliver Cromwell. They will be in five volumes folio; and are selected from a vast number of manuscripts which were in the late lord Somers's library, by a very sensible man. If you have not already ordered them to be sub-

scribed for, allow me to add your name to the list, and accept of them as a mark (though a very poor one) of my desire to contribute to your amusement.

The severity of the weather has occasioned greater sums of money to be given in charity, than ever was heard of before. Mr. Pope has written two stanzas on the occasion : which I must send you, because they are his ; for they have no other merit to entitle them to be conveyed so far :

“ Yes ! ” — “ ’tis the time,” I cried ; “ impose the chain

Destin’d and due to wretches self-enslav’d : ” —
But when I saw such charity remain,
I half could wish this people should be sav’d.

Faith lost, and hope, our charity begins :

And ’tis a wise design on pitying heav’n, —
If this can cover multitudes of sins,
To take the only way to be forgiv’n.

I am sure you will be sorry to hear that poor old Griffin the player is dead, for I

think he has left no actor behind him that can supply his parts.

You confound me, dear madam, by requesting me to choose you a representative in my grotto: you will never want one in my heart; where your image is immoveably fixed, with every amiable quality to adorn and secure its seat. But, if I am to have yet another proof of your generosity, I must prefer the alabaster vases, which may serve as a monument of the happiness I enjoy in your friendship; and I shall take care to place them so as that an inscription can be put under them, that may perpetuate the memory of what I am so justly proud of.

I wish I was acquainted with the author of *Gustavus Vasa*, and had interest enough to prevail with him to write the epic poem you desire; since to contribute in any degree to your entertainment, would be an unfeigned pleasure to, dear madam, &c.,

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD *.

Florence, April 3, N. S., 1740.

SINCE you have a mind to compare the different views in which travellers of different ages see the countries through which they pass, I will give you as good a description of this place and people as I can. And, to be the better enabled to undertake so fine a picture, I am, with great industry, informing myself in the language and history of Tuscany.

I am very glad to hear Bandello's novels are reprinting in England, and very thankfully accept of the favour your ladyship intends me. Their price here is sixteen guineas; so that I need not add, this copy cannot be mine. I hope the

* In answer to the last.

English edition has the dedications before the stories; for these are as valuable as any part of the work.

It is a great satisfaction to me that you approve of the alabaster vases, since of late the manufacture of these is come to a much greater perfection than ever. There is one man particularly, whose work is much more valuable than the rest; and of him I yesterday received a pair from Volterra, that I had bespoken for you. I am endeavouring to add to them some of the inlaid work that was peculiar to the gallery here, till, upon the death of the late great-duke, the best workmen went to Naples, which makes every thing good of this kind very scarce: but I am promised a very curious fruit-piece; which, if I receive it time enough, I will send with your vases.

The enclosed ode, a translation from Metastasio, is by the person who translated the ballad, from the same author,

which I sent in a former letter. As I have not seen the original, I cannot tell whether he has done it justice or not ; but such as it is I send it, with a hearty prayer that we may be as constant in friendship as this swain proposes to be in love.

H. L. POMFRET.

SUMMER.

OBEDIENT since to nature's laws
 Its flow'ry gifts the Spring withdraws,
 Summer succeeds, to fill the place,
 And yellow wreaths her temples grace.
 The sun mounts high ; and, all below,
 The scorching sands impatient glow :
 On Afric's shores the sultry rays
 Scarce more insufferably blaze.
 In vain the thirsty leaves attend,
 The cooling dews no more descend ;
 And gentle rains refresh no more
 The fading grass, the dying flower :

The exhausted spring, and scanty brook,
 Their wonted bed have now forsook.

See ! to the weary reaper's head
 The new-cut corn supplies the bed.
 With sweat bedew'd his face, his breast—
 Such sleep is faintness, more than rest.
 With ready hands, and tender care,
 Kneels by his side the am'rous fair ;
 And, careless what the world may say,
 The trickling moisture wipes away.

On the dry ground, o'ercome with heat,
 Lies, melting, at his master's feet,
 The faithful dog ; nor once essays
 His limbs to move, or voice to raise :
 With panting sides, and lab'ring breast,
 His throat with tedious thirst opprest,
 Vainly his opening jaws extends,
 Greedy to catch the cooling winds.

The steer—once master of the herd,
 For early courage lov'd and fear'd,
 Whilst on the wounded Laurel's side
 In sportive fight his horns he tried—
 Stretch'd on the bank, all idly lies,
 His fav'rite heifer faintly eyes :
 Both feel the change ; and, languid now,
 Each to the other plaintive low.

The bird no more salutes the day,
 But flies the sun's unequal ray.
 The nightingales, in shades conceal'd,
 Their groves to screaming crickets yield.

Stript of his ancient skin, the snake,
 With youth recover'd, quits the brake;
 Coil'd on a naked stump at noon,
 Boasts his new spots, enjoys the sun.

The shallow shores and briny lake
 Their mute inhabitants forsake :
 These, wond'ring, feel their wat'ry seat
 Glow with the penetrating heat.
 Closely retir'd to mossy caves,
 They cease to range the tepid waves ;
 Beneath the rocks, or sea-weed, shun
 The ardours of the mid-day sun.

My Phyllis, while I fondly gaze,
 Forgetful of the summer's rays,
 Thy piercing eyes, with surer aim,
 Strike to my heart the subtile flame.
 With thee, my path let Love dispose
 Through Lybian sands, or Scythian snows,
 Ev'ry climate blest shall be,
 Ev'ry sense employ'd on thee.
 Beneath yon mountain's barren brow,
 A valley lies conceal'd below ;

Cool is the site, and constant shades
 Embrown the venerable glades.
 Here the streams, which from the steep
 Impetuous fell, now gently creep
 From little lakes, or wand'ring feed
 The living verdure of the mead.
 Here the sun casts a doubtful light,
 Like that when Phœbe gilds the night.
 Here nor rude flocks, nor ruder swain,
 The sacred solitudes profane.
 Or if, by chance, the furtive ray
 Steal in, and make unusual day,
 The limpid brook reflects the trees,
 Lightly trembling with the breeze.
 Here, with my love, indulgent Pow'rs,
 Grant me to pass the smiling hours,—
 Widely banish'd anxious care,
 The muse and Phyllis ever near.
 Let others, with suspicious eye,
 Pierce the clouds of destiny ;
 On what may come their thoughts employ,
 And rashly lose the present joy.

Thus, whilst I fleeting life beguile,
 Love and the muse propitious smile.
 Of present bliss secure; the close,
 The changing scene, let Heav'n dispose.
 My peace of mind shall ne'er be sold
 To rage of pow'r, or thirst of gold ;

Nor idle fears my rest betray,
 Of frosty age, and slow decay.
 Bow'd though my back, my beard all white,
 Still shall the long-wound strings delight;
 The accent hoarse, and trembling throat,
 Coupled with the jarring note :—
 Those eyes, my love, no longer bright,
 Tender thoughts shall still excite :
 Thy wither'd hand I'll still caress,
 And with cold kisses fondly press.

Ye Pow'rs that bless the seats above,
 Patrons of innocence and love !
 Let Phyllis and my lyre engage
 The tedious hours of wasting age.

My feeble life should fate extend,
 Ev'n the last hours I'll cheerful spend ;
 Enjoying, grateful for the past,
 My lyre and Phyllis to the last.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Florence, April 10, N. S., 1746.

AT present I have nothing more material to do, than to obey your commands in respect to Florence.

This place sprang from the ancient Fiesoli; which it afterwards destroyed, and the ruins of which still remain on one of the hills, that, at the distance of four or five miles, surround the city. It is beautiful in itself, and beautiful in its situation. The river Arno, that divides it in half, runs clear, and wide, but is not extremely deep. Over it there are four bridges; one of which is of marble, and for its architecture reckoned the finest now in being. Four marble statues adorn the four corners of it, representing the seasons. The town is composed of well-proportioned

streets ; finely paved, and extremely clean : and there are many open places with public ornaments—such as pillars, guglios, horsemen in brass, marble groups, fountains, &c.—most of them erected to remarkable people, or on remarkable occasions. These, with the palaces and churches, make it, though not the largest, yet the most pleasing city I ever saw. There is a great deal of ground amongst the buildings, that seems formed by the inhabitants into kitchen-gardens ; and on the outside of the walls the country appears laid out as in a park, to the villas of the nobility, scattered about on the sides of those natural ramparts, the hills I before mentioned.

From the time that Florence threw off the Imperial sway, till within about two hundred years, it maintained the title of a republic, though the continual intestine jars of the people made them often change its form ; nor were they ever quiet, till concurring accidents made them submit to

receive, from the hands of Clement the Seventh and Charles the Fifth, a sovereign, in the person of Alexander of Medici, believed to be the son of the first, and affianced to the natural daughter of the other. After his murder, his wife was married to the duke of Parma. The death of the first duke did not restore the freedom that was sought by it: for, the murderer flying, the state was soon afterwards more strongly conferred on Cosmo the Great (the cousin of the deceased); in whose descendants it remained till three years ago, when, the male line becoming extinct, it was, by interposing powers, bestowed on the house of Lorraine—who were little pleased with their new subjects, and the subjects less pleased with them. The causes of this are better seen than written, by one who is become in some degree a subject of the state, by being a fixed inhabitant in its principal city.

Amongst the acquaintances I have made

here, there is one gentleman, whose employment in the government gives him the care of several manuscripts relating to the actions and affairs of the Medici family; a history of which is very much desired, but cannot be hoped for till the death of the electress. This person has lent me one book in which there are several particular tracts, relating to incidents that have taken place at different times. If it will give you any pleasure to have such imperfect accounts as I can find there, I will not fail to send them to you, in as plain English as I can.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Florence, April 17th, 1740, N. S.

As this is a week* of great devotion and retirement with all good catholics, so it is a week of great idleness and equal retirement with us protestants; who have not the opportunity of performing the outward duties of our religion, and must content ourselves with contemplation. For this, Italy affords ample scope; at least, that part of it which has come within my knowledge: ninety-nine in a hundred of the Italians being either atheists or idolaters. The latter arises from ignorance, oppression, and the natural genius of the climate—in all times, and by whatever people

* Passion Week.

inhabited, famous for superstition: as Prior says, on another occasion,

“ The object alter’d, the desire the same.”

So the Venus, the Mercury, the Mars, and all the train of lesser gods, are still subsisting under the names of Mary, Peter, John, and hundreds more, who, could we look into their canonisation, we should find had full as monstrous origins as some of the ancient deities: and the worship that is paid to them is so strongly contradictory to common sense and reason, that many men of parts and learning are tempted to throw off all tradition at once, being too indolent to search for truth under such a confused heap of imposition and nonsense. Proud of their discovery, these proceed to the other extreme: they assert the eternity of the world; deny the government of Providence; and, whilst they study the motions of the heavenly bodies, the different productions of the earth, the

beauties, the wonders, the regularities of nature, renounce the God of nature, and consequently adopt greater nonsense than they reject—if that is not too favourable a construction for the unbelievers of real sense, who will always find followers amongst men of half-understandings and superficial knowledge. What is to be expected, or thought, of those whose interest it is to be annihilated; and who vainly draw in proselytes to what, at intervals, they must, by innate conscious conviction, feel a lie? Though this is the case with many, yet, thank God! it is not so with all; and I have had the good fortune to find one (and I hope there may be many more amongst the Florentines) both of knowledge and religion. The gentleman to whom I allude, I first met by accident at Sienna; through which place he passed when I was there. He spent most of his youth in the court of Rome; has conversed much with foreigners of all nations; and

knows not only the history, but the government, and particular characters of the principal personages, of every court of Europe. He speaks French and English perfectly well; is a man of high rank, good-nature, and good breeding; and having no engagement, either in love or business, very often does us the favour to bestow some of his time at our house. From his assistance, better than by the little knowledge I have of Italian, I hope to make you acquainted with Florence—a place which, from its beauty, is justly styled “*the fair*.”

Other towns seem to have grown from small beginnings; this, like the creation, appears to have arisen at once: each part corresponding with the others; and all gay, noble, and convenient. It is so perfectly clean, that there is not the least ill smell in the streets all the year round. The shops are replenished with all the luxuries as well as the necessaries of life;

and the place is so full of people, that the number of the inhabitants is estimated at eighty thousand, though the circumference of the walls is not more than five miles, and (as I said in my last) there are many gardens and vacant places within them. The nobility are well bred towards strangers, and live in society with each other. The natural genius of this people, for many years, led them to opposition and rebellion amongst themselves; which often reduced the state to the lowest ebb, and frequently threw them into the power of foreigners: till the house of Medici, prevailing over the rest, quieted that disposition so effectually, that we now see them, rich, powerful, and free, tamely submit to the name only of a great-duke, who spends their money in a distant country, and leaves them to the government of his hungry Lorrainers. It is true they are not pleased with this, but yet they do not seek redress; and the Florentines of

the commonwealth are as different from the Florentines of the duchy, as our Plantagenets were from our Stuarts. Nor are these people less inclined to arts, than they were once to arms; the most famous painters, sculptors, and musicians, having drawn their original from hence. They have also excelled in the nobler sciences; modern learning having been first revived here, and still flourishing more than in any other parts of Italy. The language in which the books are written, is even, by way of eminence, called Tuscan; and all others (as the Venetian, Milanese, Neapolitan, and even Roman languages) are reckoned only jargons in respect of this.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Florence, May 8, N. S., 1740.

A SHORT journey that I have lately made round this part of Tuscany, has occupied ten days of my time, and afforded me many new and agreeable objects. The reason of this tour was, that the chapter of St. Stephen (the great-duke's order), which is holden every three years at Pisa, was holden a few days ago; and the gentleman whom I mentioned in my last invited us to see it, providing us an apartment in the priory of the knights of Malta. This order was founded by Cosmo the First*; who, though as a private man a most consummate villain, was one of the best governors and most magnificent

* In the year 1561.

princes of his age. When, after the murder of his cousin Alexander, the Florentines declared him duke, amongst other regulations he endeavoured to restore Pisa out of that miserable state to which its conquest by the commonwealth had reduced it. To this end he established there a university; made the forest perfectly beautiful, and convenient for hunting; and built a palace, where he resided, with his court, for three months every winter, to take that diversion. And because the Pisans had formerly been powerful upon the sea (for at one time they sent three hundred galleys to the holy war), that their genius might be revived he founded this order of St. Stephen. It is composed of men and boys of all professions, provided they prove their nobility for four degrees. They make their caravan in the great-duke's galleys, which should go out every year for that purpose; when they are to secure the

borders of Tuscany, and to invade the Turks, to whom they profess (like the knights of Malta) a perpetual enmity. In their ceremonials they wear the ancient habit of these knights reversed; that is, a white stuff lined with crimson silk: and have at all times a red enamelled cross hanging by a ribbon of the same colour, either at their button-hole, or round their neck. The three vows they make are, of obedience, poverty, and conjugal chastity.

The church of St. Stephen, in which they hold their chapter, is very finely painted, and gilded on the ceiling. It consists of one large aisle; in which are four altars besides the high altar, all very rich in silver ornaments. The whole was hung with crimson damask, in which were woven the arms and ensigns of the order, with the trophies of war; and which was laced with gold between each breadth. Around the upper part of the church,

were colours, arms, and other spoils, taken from the Turks; and the place through which they passed in procession to hear mass, was adorned with colours. As soon as the mass was ended, they formed themselves into a chapter or council; which, when they were seated, had a pretty effect from the gallery whence I saw them.

We afterwards dined with the president of the order; who keeps a very magnificent table for the whole eight days that the meeting lasts. The evening's diversion was a very good opera: and a fair, of the product of several countries (but, to my great satisfaction, mostly of England), employed the beau-monde in the mornings; for on these occasions the town is always filled with strangers. The inhabitants of the place are very few; which, when one considers its former glory, and its fine situation, excites a melancholy reflexion. The cathedral—the beautiful belfry, en-

compassed with several ranges of small pillars one above another, and so built that it very visibly inclines towards one side; the cloister for the reception of the dead; and the Battisterio;—all separate, though near to each other, and standing on a large flat of fine green sward;—serve as a monument of what that city was, and of what the people could once afford to execute.

In our return home we took another road; having an inclination to see the little republic of Lucca, which has found means to subsist even in the jaws (if I may use that expression) of the greater powers that surround it. But as this is a very copious subject, I shall not enter upon it now; fearing I have already been too prolix. If, however, you care to be troubled with any more of such stuff, it is always in your power to command it.

H. L. POMFRET.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

London, April 17, O. S., 1740.

As my letter of the 6th of December was lost, I must repeat to you one piece of news contained in it; and that is, a purchase which my lord has made of a house in Buckinghamshire, that belonged to lord Bathurst*. We designed at first only to have rented it; but as it was more convenient to him to sell it, and as we were extremely pleased both with its distance from London and the quality of the land about it, we took the resolution to make it entirely our own. It stands in a little paddock of about a mile and a half round;

* Richkings (or Ricking's) Park, at present the residence of John Sullivan, esq. See one of the preceding letters.

which is laid out in the manner of a French park, interspersed with woods and lawns. There is a canal in it about twelve hundred yards long*, and proportionably broad; which has a stream continually running through it, and is deep enough to carry a pleasure-boat. It is well stocked with carp and tench; and at its upper end there is a green-house, containing a good collection of orange, myrtle, geranium, and oleander trees. This is a very agreeable room; either to drink tea, play at cards, or sit in with a book, in a summer's evening. In one of the woods (through all which there are winding paths) there is a cave; which, though little more than a rude heap of stones, is not without charms for me. A spring gushes out at the back of it; which, falling into a basin (whose brim it overflows), passes along a channel in the pavement,

* This is afterwards corrected to 555 yards.

where it loses itself. The entrance of this recess is overhung with periwinkle ; and its top is shaded with beeches, large elms, and birch. There are several covered benches ; and little arbours interwoven with lilacs, woodbines, seringas, and laurels ; and seats, under shady trees ; disposed all over the park. One great addition to the pleasure of living here, is the gravelly soil ; which, after a day of rain (if it holds up only for two or three hours), one may walk over without being wet through one's shoes : and there is one gravel walk that encompasses the whole. We propose to make an improvement, by adding to the present ground a little pasture farm which is just without the pale ; because there is a very pretty brook of clear water which runs through the meadows to supply our canal, and whose course winds in such a manner that it is almost naturally a serpentine river. I am afraid I have tired you with the de-

scription of what appear to me beauties in our little possession; yet I cannot help adding one convenience that attends it:—this is, the cheap manner in which we keep it: since it only requires a flock of sheep, who graze the lawns fine; and, whilst these are feeding, their shepherd cleans away any weeds that spring up in the gravel, and removes dry leaves or broken branches that would litter the walks.

You see, my dear lady Pomfret, that I rely upon your friendship, and in that confidence venture to talk to you of whatever is uppermost in my thoughts; which, as they are apt to turn on my own affairs, would be very little interesting to a person who has less goodness towards me than you have. However, not to be entirely silent on subjects of more general importance, I must tell you that the princess Augusta is just recovered from the chicken-pox; and that princess Amelia has kept her room above a week, with a

pain in her ear and a feverish disorder. Princess Caroline has not been in the drawing-room above these four months; and I fancy she scarcely ever will again, for she has very nearly lost the use of her limbs. Princess Mary is to be attended to Hesse-Cassel by only a page, a gentleman-usher, one of the Kemps, a daughter of Frowlands, and Mrs. Mailbourn.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

London, April 24, 1740.

YOUR description of Florence is very beautiful; and I am pleased while I form an idea of the satisfaction that a person of your taste must receive when you are viewing so many monuments of great actions, and of the perfection to which architecture and sculpture have been brought in the place where you now reside. But I dare say that pleasure is sometimes attended with a melancholy reflexion—that the descendants of a people so famed for arts and arms as the old Romans were, should degenerate into the most abject slavery; that those lands which Quintus Cincinnatus, and other patricians of Rome, did not disdain to cul-

* In answer to the letter in page 204.

tivate with their own hands, should now have become the property of a set of lazy priests and monks.

It will be doing me a great favour, as well as giving me great pleasure, if you will communicate to me some of the remarkable things which you will undoubtedly meet with in the manuscript you mention. It, however, requires something more than a moderate assurance, to give you so much trouble, whilst I am without a prospect of sending you any accounts that can serve for more than a momentary amusement.

Mrs. Purcell sent to me yesterday, to ask if I would see the princess Mary's clothes and laces. They were all laid in order, on two tables which are the whole length of the poor queen's state bedchamber, from whence the bed is removed. There are four night-gowns (three trimmed), and one blue tabby embroidered with silver; four sacks or robes, all trimmed—that for the wedding-night is silver tissue, faced

and doubled to the bottom before with pink-coloured satten, and trimmed with a silver *point d'Espagne*. The stiff-bodied gown she is to be married in, is very nearly the same as the princess-royal's was: there is an embroidery upon white, with gold and colours, very rich; and a stuff on a gold ground, prodigiously fine, with flowers shaded up the middle of the breadths like painting, and a kind of embossed work of blue and silver towards the edges. Mrs. Purcell assured me that she bought the gold by itself, before the stuff was woven; and that there was in it no less than eighteen pounds weight. This, to me, sounds incredible; but she affirms it to be true. There are four more fine gowns besides these; four fine laced Brussels heads—two looped and two grounded; and two extremely fine point ones, with ruffles and tippets; six French caps and ruffles:—handkerchiefs, &c. without number.

F. HARTFORD.

TO THE COUNTESS OF HARTFORD.

Florence, May 29, N. S., 1740.

As I am fixed in this place till April, I wish to bring you acquainted with my habitation. It is situated near the extremity of the city: so that, from a little room that I have taken to myself, and made warm for the winter (which, I believe, will never end), I can sit by the fire-side, and out of one of my windows see, over all the intervening gardens, the mountain where the ruins of Fiesoli still remain; and from the other, opposite to it, look into my own garden—a very large one, considering that it is in a city. On the site of the house, as high as I can trace its original with certainty, stood one belonging to the great countess Matilda, so famous in all the Italian histories. After her death it

passed, no doubt, through various hands: but the next appearance I can find of it was in the time of Machiavelli; when it was a celebrated pleasure-house, in the possession of the Rucellai family: and here the famous discourses upon Titus Livius, by those three ingenious men Nicolo Machiavelli, Zinobi Buondelmonte, and Cosimo Rucellai, were written. From this period, I am unable to find what became of it till John Charles, cardinal of Medici, son of the great-duke Cosmo the Second, took a fancy to its situation, and built a house here. This contained one very fine large room for company, and two apartments below stairs for summer, with rooms over for the winter, and others above these for the servants. The ceilings, pictures, and furniture (still here), are suitable to the grandeur of the builder. In this place he passed all his hours of private pleasure; which, as it is said, were not the least part of his life.

After his death, all his effects were sold to pay his debts; and this house was bought by the marchese Ridolfi, who added as much more to it. The building now encloses a square paved court. The new apartments, both above and below, are extremely good and well disposed; furnished with red velvet trimmed with gold, blue damask, &c.; besides pictures, cabinets, and other ornamental conveniences.

The garden contains about eight acres. Through the middle runs one large walk of orange and lemon trees; and intermixed amongst them, at equal distances, are marble statues, not bad. In this walk is a large oblong fountain, enclosed with pedestals of rough stone, having between them stone benches. In the centre is an island; on which stands a fine colossal figure thirty feet high, representing a rough mountain goat-herd drinking out of a gourd. Besides this, there are four

other lesser fountains, each in the midst of a grass-plot surrounded with fruit-trees. On one side of the garden are hedges of cedra and cedrati: and on the other, a thick wood of bay-trees; at the bottom of which, and opposite to the house, is a large grotto, with three rooms. The middle one of these is circular; and the walls of it seem like water petrified, in which are figures of men, trees, and beasts. It is lighted at the top by a large oval glass, that forms the bottom of a basin for fish, to which there is an ascent on the outside of the grotto. On its exterior it appears like a mount in the wood. In the two lesser rooms, one on each side, are rural paintings. The upper end of the grove of bays leads into another walk of bay-trees, which runs across the great walk first mentioned; and in the middle of this there is a covered seat, painted with the Adoration of the Kings. Here I generally spend an hour every morning,

being sheltered in it alike from the wind and the sun.

As I was the other day taking my usual exercise, I perceived, in the walk which bounds the garden, a square stone, with an old-fashioned hat carved upon it; and, beneath this, an inscription, intimating that it was built by *Bianca Capello* in the year 1574. As this date was betwixt the time of Rucellai and that of the cardinal, it raised my curiosity to know who this Bianca was, and how the place came into her hands. Signor Uguccioni (the person I before mentioned to you as having an employment in the office of records) coming to visit us in the afternoon, I made inquiry of him; and learned that Rucellai had forfeited these lands to the first great-duke, and that they remained ever after in the Medici family till they were sold to pay the cardinal's debts. I then asked, what this Bianca Capello had to do with it; and he observed to me, that I must have

made but little use of the manuscript he had lent me, for in that I should have found her whole history. As soon as he was gone, I had recourse to my book; and the story proved so extraordinary a one, that, in hopes it may contribute to your amusement, I have translated it into as good English as I can *.

H. L. POMFRET.

* This history, from its being already well known to the public, is omitted here.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET*.

London, May 1, O. S., 1740.

YOUR last letter gave me a dreadful idea of the state of religion in Italy; but your observation is certainly very just. Doctor Middleton, of Cambridge, wrote a book about seven or eight years ago, to prove the similitude between paganism and popery. It was written in a good style, with a great deal of wit, and many strokes of raillery; but he was suspected of carrying his reflexions a little too far, and glancing at religion in general. I believe you have read it; for it was much spoken of and admired at the time of its publication.

The methodists lose ground amongst us,

* In answer to the letter in page 208.

though they have had the honour to convert my lord and lady Huntingdon * both to their doctrines and practice ; and the town says, that lady Margaret Hastings † is certainly to marry one of their preachers, whose name is Ingham.

The rising of the parliament has very much emptied the town, by setting its members at liberty. As soon as princess Mary is gone to Hesse-Cassel, the royal family will settle at Kensington for the summer.

We talk of nothing but encampments, bringing in Spanish prizes, taking forts, and such-like heroic exploits : and this

* Theophilus earl of Huntingdon. His countess was lady Selina Shirley, second daughter, and one of the co-heiresses, of Washington earl of Ferrers. He died in October 1746. His lady survived him many years, and was to the last a strenuous supporter of the above sect.

† Sister to the earl of Huntingdon. She was married to the rev. — Ingham ; and died in May 1768.

eternal turn of conversation, added to the hurrying life I lead, makes me envy the description given in the first book of Kings, of Solomon's subjects—who dwell safely each under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree. In my present way of thinking, if I had a seat upon a throne, I would gladly exchange it for one in such a situation as that expression gives me an idea of. Naming the book of Kings, puts me in mind of a twelve-penny pamphlet, called (in the title page) “A Chronicle of the Kings of England,” in the manner of the eastern writers; by Nathan Ben Saadi, a priest of the Jews. It is however, in reality, a performance of my lord Chesterfield; who, in my opinion, has shewn more of his talent for profaneness than wit, in this attempt to burlesque the style of the Old Testament*.

* Her ladyship has here unintentionally done lord Chesterfield injustice. Mr. Robert Dodsley, the

There are two reports to-day; one of which I would fain disbelieve, but perhaps the other may be true. The first is, that the king goes to Hanover in a fortnight; the other, that the duke of Argyle is out of all his posts. This is such a short ill-written letter, that I am ashamed to send it: but I had fourteen people last night at supper; nearly as many to-day at breakfast; am to have a great number to dine; and, besides, my young folks have made me twenty visits. Let this plead my excuse; and prove to you that no hurry can make me forget the friendship and respect with which I am, to your ladyship and your family,

a most obedient

humble servant,

F. HARTFORD.

bookseller, was certainly the author of this Chronicle, which is published in his works.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

London, May 8, N. S., 1740.

I FORESEE that this letter will be very much in the style of Dyer's News-writer: which I dare say your ladyship was acquainted with in the days of your youth; for I believe my lord Windsor and my grandfather generally employed the same kind of writers, and encouraged the papers of the same side. The end of a session of parliament always furnishes a great deal of matter for the journalists and gazetteers. The changes are the present subject of all conversation; and one naturally writes what one hears spoken in every company. Both the reports I mentioned in my last prove true: his majesty visits his German dominions; and the duke of Argyle is turned out of all his

employments, and is succeeded in his government of Portsmouth by general Honnywood. My lord Hartford has got the regiment of blue-guards, and the duke of Marlborough kissed the king's hand yesterday for the troop, which my lord had. It is said, that the duke of Cumberland is to be master of the ordnance. The duke of Bolton has the band of pensioners; and the duke of Montagu, general Evans's regiment. My lord Hervey is lord-privy-seal; and lord Sidney Beauclerk *, vice-chamberlain.

Princess Mary is to be married to-night. I shall not attend the ceremony, though I have had new clothes for the purpose; but I mean to go to-morrow, to pay my respects and wish joy. I have seen so many of these forms, that I have no curiosity: and as my nephew and both my children will be there, I shall not be

* Fifth son of the duke of St. Albans.

missed; or, if I am, may easily be excused, since they are all much finer than I have made myself.

I have seen the ballad of Metastasio, which I believe your ladyship designed me: it begins "*Grazie agl'inganni tuoi.*" Lord Brooke brought it me. It is extremely pretty in the Italian; but I cannot say I think the gentleman has been so happy in the translation of it*, as he has in "*The Estate*" of the same author, which a friend of mine has lent me in the original. I have read several of Metastasio's dramatic pieces lately, and am particularly pleased with the "*Clemenza di Tito.*"

The last week was an unfavourable one to me, for it brought me no letter from your ladyship; but I hope this day to receive one, if the foreign mail comes in.

* Two different translations of this little piece are given: the first at page 163 of this vol.; the other at page 23 of vol. ii.

I passed the whole day yesterday at Rich-
kings, and would have been glad to have
had more time there; for the amusements
of that place suit my genius much bet-
ter than those which I am condemned
to share here for some time longer.

F. HARTFORD.

* Two different translations of this little piece
are given: the first at page 103 of this vol.; the
other at page 23 of vol. II.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

London, May 13, 1740, O. S.

WE go to-morrow to our *Bergerie*, as Mr. Pope calls it in one of his letters, for a week or ten days, where I shall often walk, and sit in my cave or green-house with you in imagination. I shall conduct you through my woods, and ask you whether the Hyde-park statues, that terminate our walks, and seem to guard our lawns, claim for their originals any of those fine ones which you have seen in Italy. Then, not to let you dwell too long on a comparison, which must be so much to my disadvantage, I will endeavour to turn your eyes to the verdure of our pastures, as the only thing which can pretend to vie with the countries you have travelled through.

The news-papers will inform you, that the princess Mary's marriage was solemnised in St. James's chapel on Thursday last; and I can tell you very little more; for I was not there, having already attended twice on the like occasion. I considered that I could add no grace to the pomp, but might contribute heat to the crowd; and therefore I was happier neither to increase nor share in the inconveniences of that assembly. Lord Brook and my children, who saw it, told me that the duke of Newcastle read the contract, and afterwards the marriage vow, which the duke of Cumberland repeated after him, by procuration from the prince of Hesse. I went the next day to wish the princess joy; she had on the ear-rings and *solitaire* which the prince had sent her. They are of brilliants, which, both by their size and water, are as magnificent as any that I ever saw. She has besides an

extremely fine ring, and it is said there is a very noble stomacher of diamonds, with other jewels, ready to be presented to her, when she arrives at Hesse Cassel.

The king has created the duke of Kent marquis de'Grey, which title devolves, by the patent, on my lord-chancellor's eldest son*, who is to marry lord Glenorchy's daughter, by lady Bell Grey, on whom, it is said, the duke of Kent settles

* The title of marchioness Grey descended, on the duchess of Kent's death, which was in June 1740, according to the limitation in the patent, to her eldest grand-daughter lady Jemima Campbell, who was married in the May preceding to the hon. Philip Yorke, eldest son of lord-chancellor Hardwicke, with remainder to her issue male, for want of which the title of marquis became extinct on lady Grey's death; but the barony of Lucas devolved on her eldest daughter Arabella, widow of John lord Polworth.

eight thousand pounds a-year. This will soon be theirs; for his grace is not expected to live five days.

END OF VOL. I.





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